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GARDENS AND DESIGN



Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.

GARDENS & DESIGN

by J. C. SHEPHERD, A.R.I.B.A.,

and

G. A. JELLCOE, A.R.I.B.A.

Authors of

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of the
Renaissance"

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“ I went into a house, and it wasn’t a house.

It has big steps and a great big hall ;

But it hasn’t got a garden,

A garden,

A garden,

It isn’t like a house at all.”

“ WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG.”

(A. A. Milne.)

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J. C. S.
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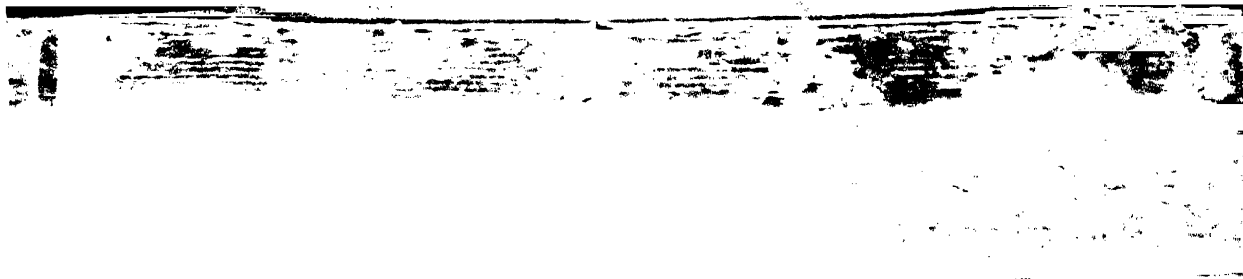
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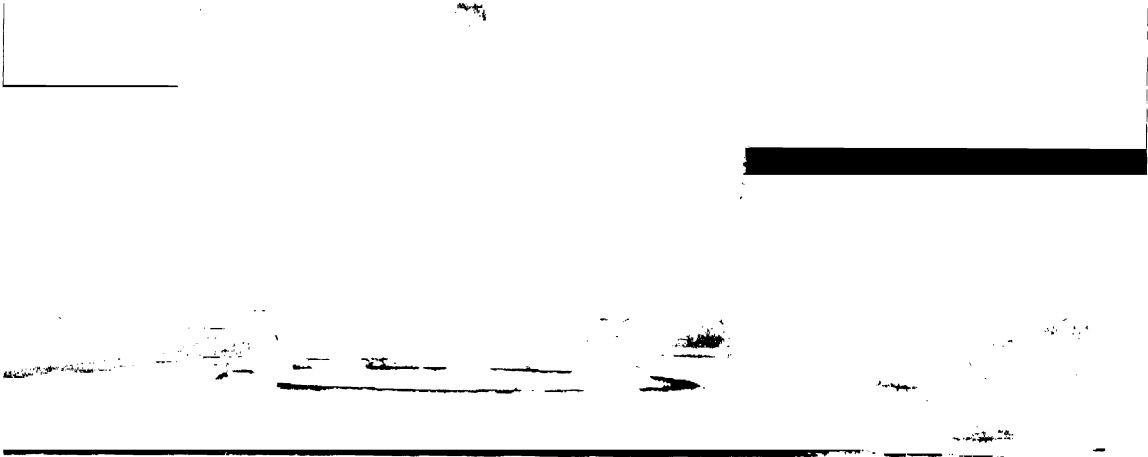
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PART 1



Villa Gori, Siena.

Association of Ideas: Perpetuity and Change in the Theatre.



Villa Dona Dalle Rose, Italy.

Photo, H. B. Cumine.

I

PEOPLE AND GARDENS

THAT caprice, the garden, imprints upon the countryside all the lights and shadows of humanity. Although it is a place of pleasant relaxation, the whole significance is founded on reason. It is from reason that it comes into being at all, and it is reason that has coloured every beautiful plan. We know that while the garden throws over us a spell, the spell is intimately founded on common sense. Reason gives the design, and round design are woven all those fanciful fantastic ideas that are figments of the human brain, things that are mostly illusion.

The planning of the garden is as much a matter of logic as that of the house. The nature of soil, aspect, and any material interests already on the site, all have their influence on the design. If privacy is important, logic suggests the entrance front of the house is so placed to shield the garden behind; and if sun is wanted in the rooms facing the garden, it follows the approach is from the north. In the disposition of the garden, the parts fall naturally into their relative positions round the house; and are as accessible as possible. Immediately round the living-rooms are gathered all that is purely for pleasure and beauty, flowers and lawns. Because flowers prefer protection, it is logical to plant them

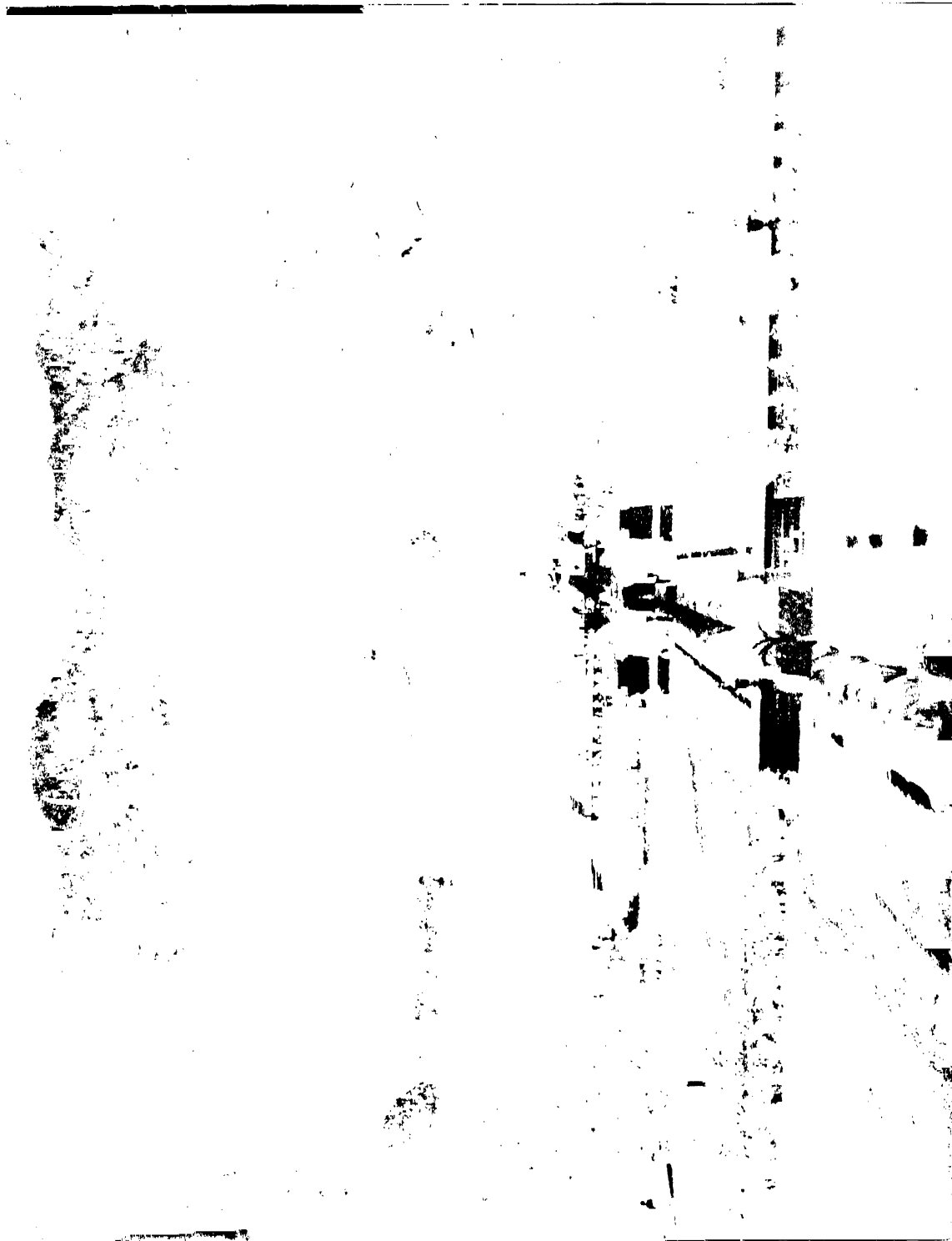


Villa d'Este, Lake Como.
Stillness deepened by Dripping Fountains.

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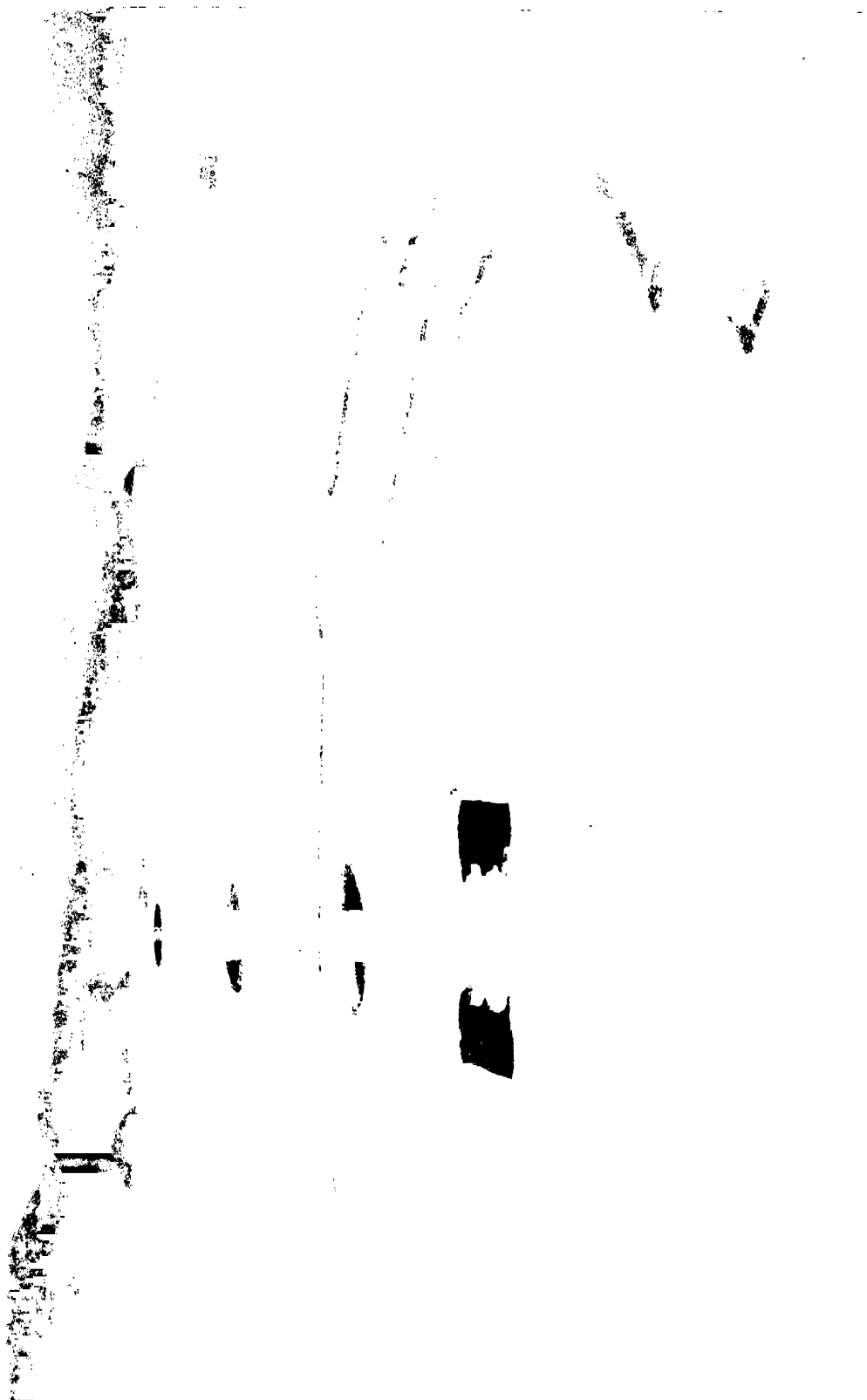
in enclosed places or back them by a wall or hedge; lawns enjoy winds and open spaces. It is logical to conform to the lie of the land: if it falls, to make terraces that are easy to walk upon; if it is flat, to break up the ground into compartments by evergreens or walls, that stop the winds and give the same protection as the terraces. Paths and walks have a purpose, to lead somewhere by the most reasonably direct route, generally a straight line. There are steps for human beings, but ramps for barrows. Shade is necessary in the summer, and a shaded garden is as important near the house as elsewhere. It is logical to grow climbing roses over pergolas to provide shade, because in winter the roses lose their leaves and nothing but the structure remains to keep out the winter sun. If hot-houses are essential for planting out, there is no reason why, like the old orangeries, they should not adjoin and be a feature of their flower garden, being well designed in themselves. Everything has a purpose, and something that has been misplaced resents it always.

The charm of a garden lies in its power over the human being, to lure him away from the cares of the world into a land of perpetual present. A garden is not wholly for pleasure, for it refreshes; and to this end the arts play upon the emotions. Perhaps the greatest secret lies in the intimacy and peacefulness of the communion with nature. Trees and flowers and plants are here in supreme repose, as though in a haven from the outside world. They offer a welcome excluded to none. Here come birds to play or wash or search for worms. The air is humming with the insect world, and there is life in the quiver of a leaf. Every sense is drawn as if by a magnet into the affairs around: underfoot is the free elastic feel of turf; and over all the sweet scent of nature casts a spell at times recalling the past faster than memory itself. Association plays its own strange rôle. There is that which peoples the emptiest garden with personal memories or the romance of history; and that which gives ideas of other things by things seen. A shape, a sound, a colour, suggests something to the imagination. Flowers are lively, animate, little things: tiger lilies are in violent conversation, pansies are confiding, lupins rear themselves proudly and indifferently. A willow tree is weeping although as contented as its



Photo, H. B. Holmes and Co.

Nishat Bagh, Kashmir.
Landscape dominating.



Photo, F. Mansell

Mondragone, Frascati.
Landscape dominated.

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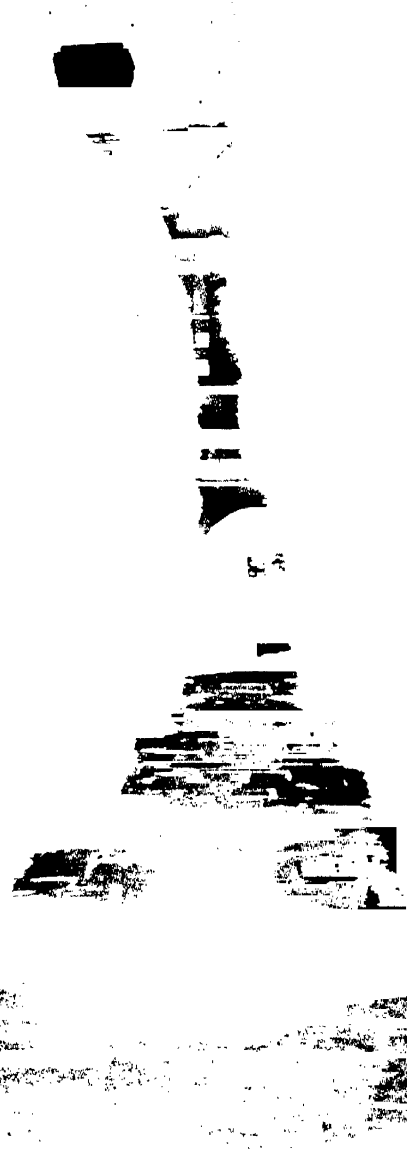
neighbour. The cypress towering above the theatre in the garden at Siena reminds us by its own eternity how quickly the actors pass across the stage. So every flower and plant, shrub or tree, in nature, suggests an emotion. Architecture expresses these things in a similar way. Long simple lines, recalling cadences of prose and poem, are calm and stately; broken lines are more excited. Steps and stairways are in perpetual motion, flowing up or pouring down; they can be sombre, or laughing, or bored to the point of yawning. Over all reigns the house, kindly or forbidding. Sounds also are full of meaning, often giving voice to their natural surroundings. A landscape is rendered more impressive, more vital, if it gives forth a note like the cry of an animal. Sea-gulls tell of the wild spaces of the sea, the lowing of cattle of calm and peaceful fields: a garden speaks through water and the infinite notes of birds. Association, too, leads to invitation: a seat, a glimpse of sunlight and green seen through a doorway in a town house, or shade on a hot summer's day. It is by suggestion that colour warms or cools almost as well as do sun and shade in fact. In Italy the colour is the subtlest shades of evergreens and stone, and under the strong sun is restful and refreshing. In England the bright colour of flowers and warm red brick enlivens an atmosphere that is generally too sombre. The gorgeousness of the tropics, where flowers and costumes flash back the rays of the sun, is too high-pitched for northern eyes. Perhaps it is through association that sculpture makes its first appeal in the garden, for it sums up the spirit of everything there, and interprets it to human understanding. The material and lasting influence of these associations is probably in no case so considerable as that of natural landscape. The constant presence of a landscape can often mould a man's whole outlook, just as in the course of time it has moulded whole races. There is a sense of the sublime about mountains and peaks that soar into the air thunderous and oppressive, for the gods live there and must not be disturbed. Open plains mean prosperity and peace, and are reassuring. A view over the weald of Sussex of villages, farms, fields, cattle, scattered trees, and woods, is light and playful and transitory; a view over the rolling downs beyond is everlasting. In

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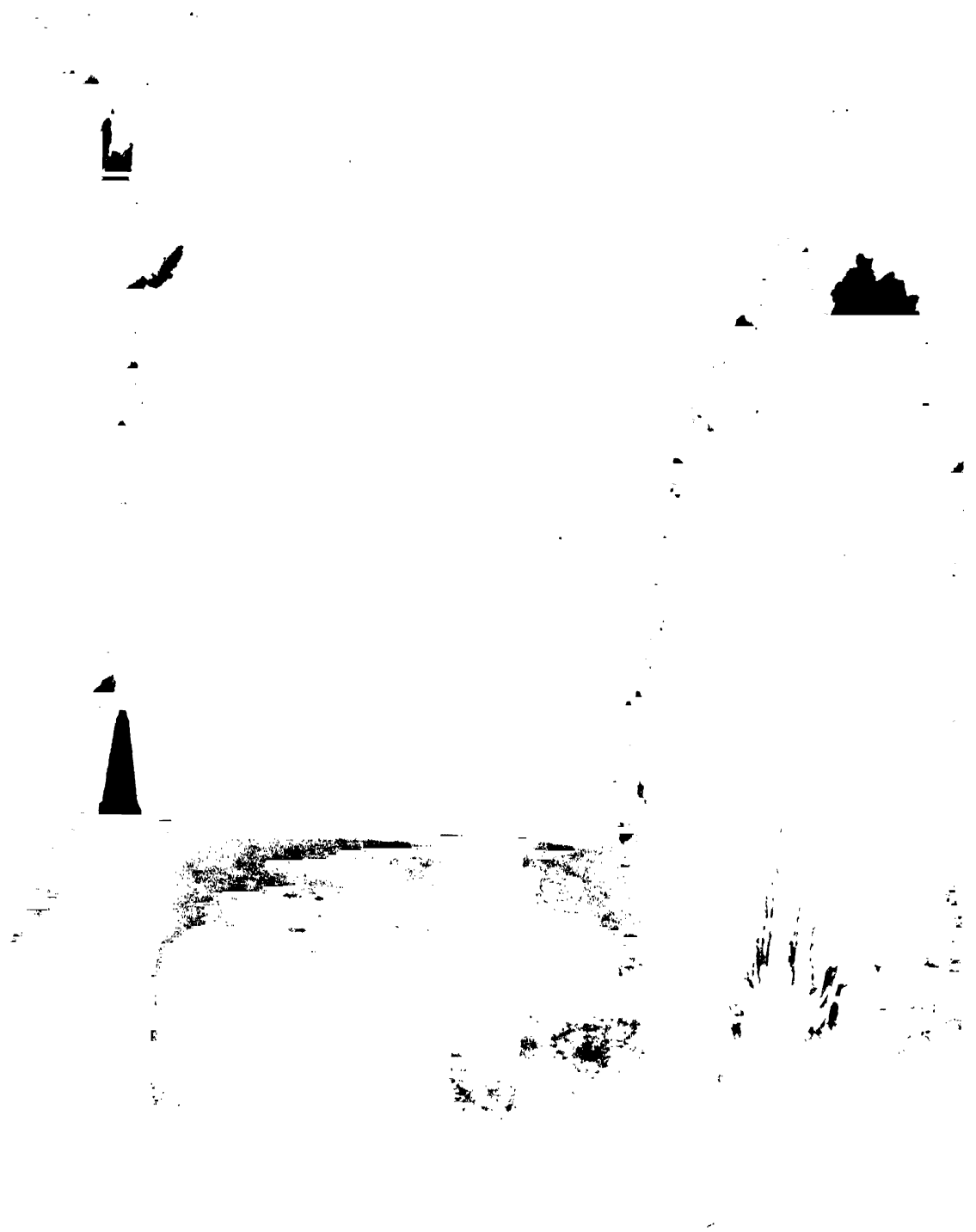
time sublimity, repose, delight or constancy finds the soul of the man who lives in its presence.

These intimate feelings and associations, while they may vary slightly with each person, are more or less common to all. They are the atoms that go to make the garden before design steps in, and are unchanging. But the human mind is essentially changeful. No two minds are alike, and this finds its expression in the disposition and type. A personality that is broad and of even temperament may be content with a place of pure simplicity, provided it is well proportioned; on the other hand, one that is temperamental feels at home only in excessive variety. People who are themselves of definite character respond to definite gardens; and the Far East, for instance, have even provided those that are martial or religious. Again, every part of the garden finds its mysterious echo in the human mind. To one person an approach to his house through towering cliffs of yew may be dark and foreboding, in another it may awaken a chord of sympathy and invitation; to both it is a preparation for what is to come. A tired mind responds to the quiet simple lines of an enclosed lawn, where a view by its constantly changing interests would be too stimulating. For this reason a garden composed of view alone becomes to most people oppressive; in all respects the mind can absorb only a certain amount of interest. In England the garden contains the interest of flowers, and the form has always remained simple probably for this reason. In Italy, where climate precludes flowers, the interest lies in the form, which is keyed from the pattern of box parterre to the rich shapes of the scheme itself. While the personality of a man may thus fit in with his own garden, so that he and nature are at home together, he cannot himself fit in visibly. The mind can shed the needs of society and civilisation as he wanders away among the trees and flowers, but the body cannot. That is why the presence of a second person often destroys the spell of the wilder parts of the garden.

The first of the sensations to cast a spell is repose. Only on a foundation of repose can there be built the variety that makes the garden stimulating. Repose depends mainly on unity, where everything is ruled over by an all-



Cleeve Prior Manor, Evesham.
Mystery of an Enclosed Approach.



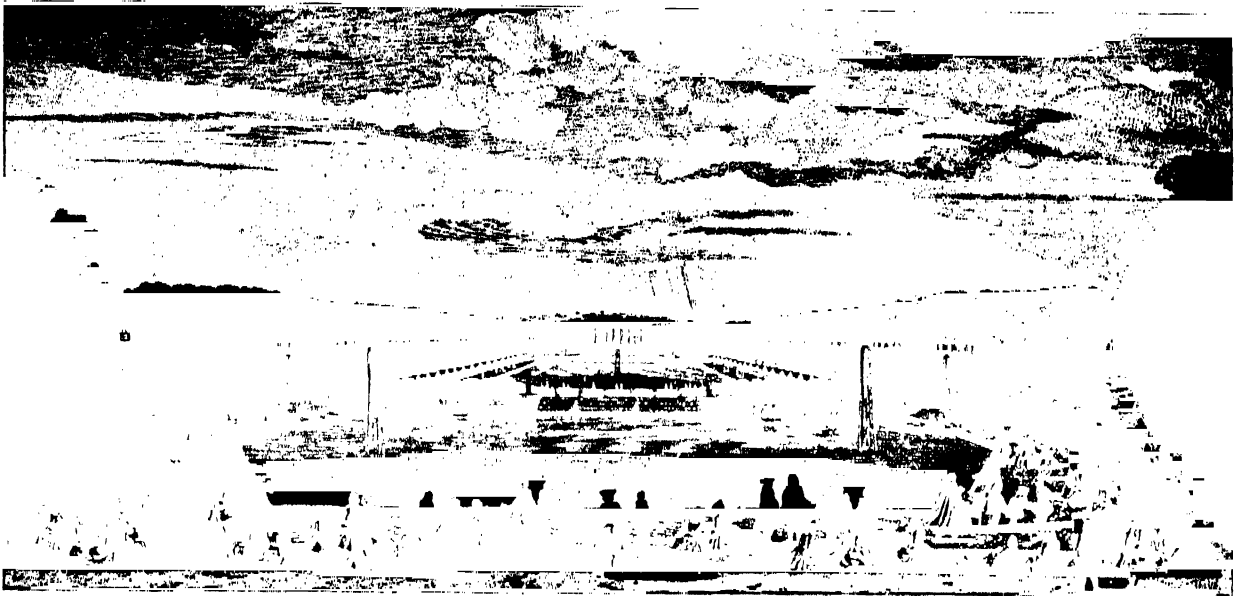
Villa near Florence.
Landscape perfectly attuned.

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presiding genius. Symmetry is restful, both because the simple balance of the parts does not require any effort to be appreciated, and because the eye easily finds its resting-place. If symmetry becomes too insistent, it no longer gives repose so much as restraint to the imagination. Straight lines are more restful than broken lines or curves, and a calm silhouette to the garden may quell all the flowers that are bursting with vitality inside. An enemy to repose is divided attention, for it can ruin the grandest view or the smallest detail. If the garden embraces the country the climax is either on the garden itself or on the country. If the latter is rich and full of interest, the former is simple and any interests that might distract are put out of sight. Similarly, a rich piece of ironwork may be a perfect entry to a lawn or a gravel walk, but a perpetual source of irritation to a flower garden. While a fine sensation can be so lightly ruined, it can be heightened by contrast. Contrast is the energy of design. The clematis that clings to the house emphasises the strength of architecture, and revels in its own fragility. Stillness is deepened by a murmur; the shade of an alley by the dappled patches of sun that penetrate the branches and suggest the heat outside. The intimacy of an enclosed garden emphasises the breadth of the open view. Square shapes foil a circle. The greatest contrast of all is to leave the sombre house and step into space and sunlight. Concentration of effect is equally magical, for a group of simple daisies may seem rich where many richer flowers, spread over a wider area, would nullify themselves and appear commonplace. Contrasts over-stressed become abrupt and jarring. There is between contrasts some elusive bond of sympathy; small elements of the one are introduced into the other. The most violent contrast of all lies always between house and country, art and nature, and there is between the two a constant interchange of sympathy. Contrast leads to interest. The more a garden is divided into parts that are secluded one from another, the more interesting does it become. There is the element of surprise, which perpetually deceives. The garden is not wholly seen at once; there are places full of mystery. In the depths of our own orchard, with the branches interlacing overhead in fairy patterns, we can disagree with Keats that fancy never

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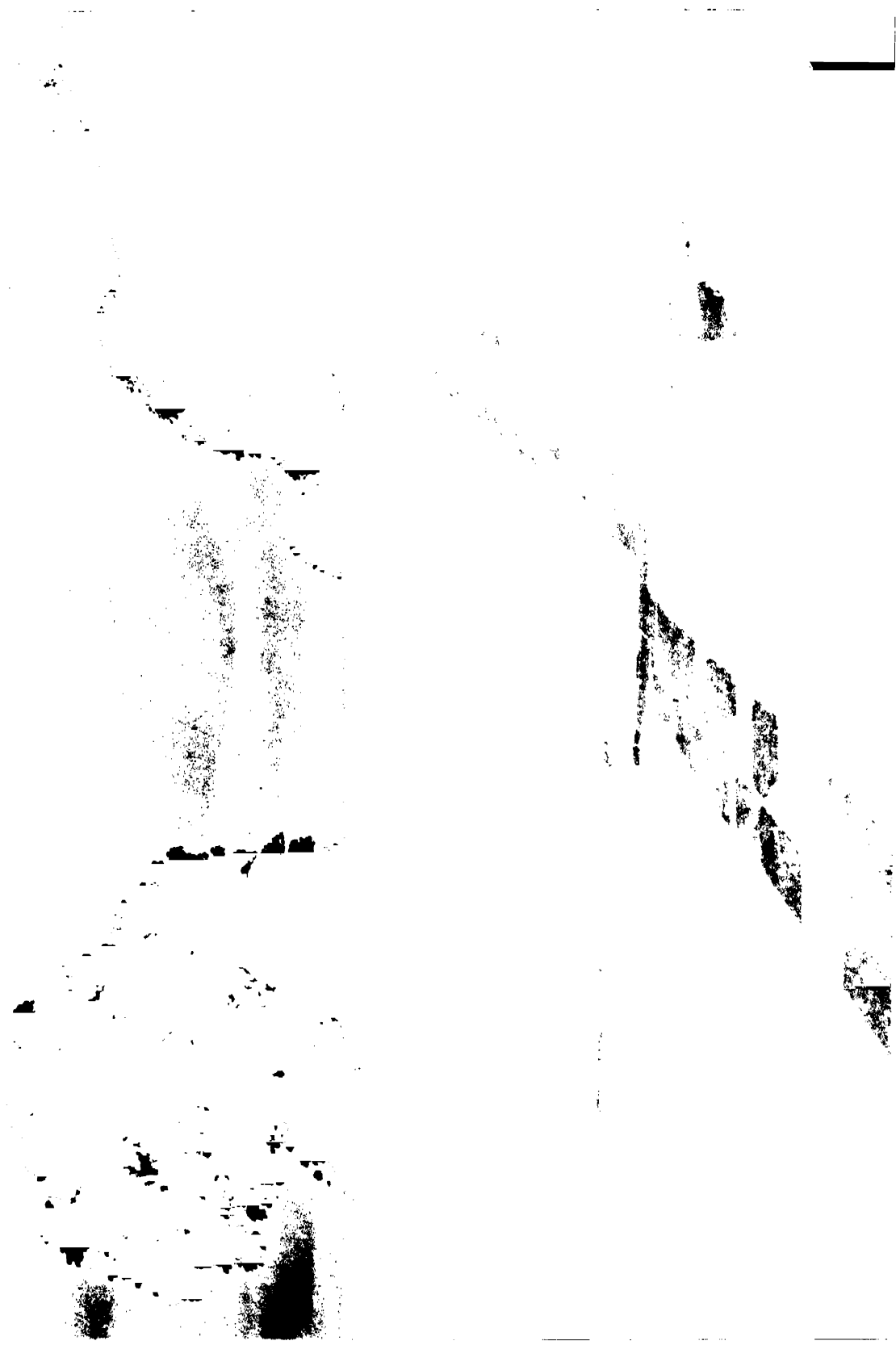
stayed at home. Other places are kept away because they are conceits, and conceits wear thin with constant use. One person may enjoy a grotto where secret fountains spring upon the unwary guest; another prefers his rock garden, where strange and beautiful plants are staged profusely. The little theatre in the garden at Marlia is an idea of peculiar charm, with its wings and prompter's box and footlights clipped in box. These are often the incidents of the garden, phantasies of the moment that have no lasting value. With surprise is coupled wonder, a sudden spectacle seen from a pre-arranged position: a distant view,



Marly-le-Roi.

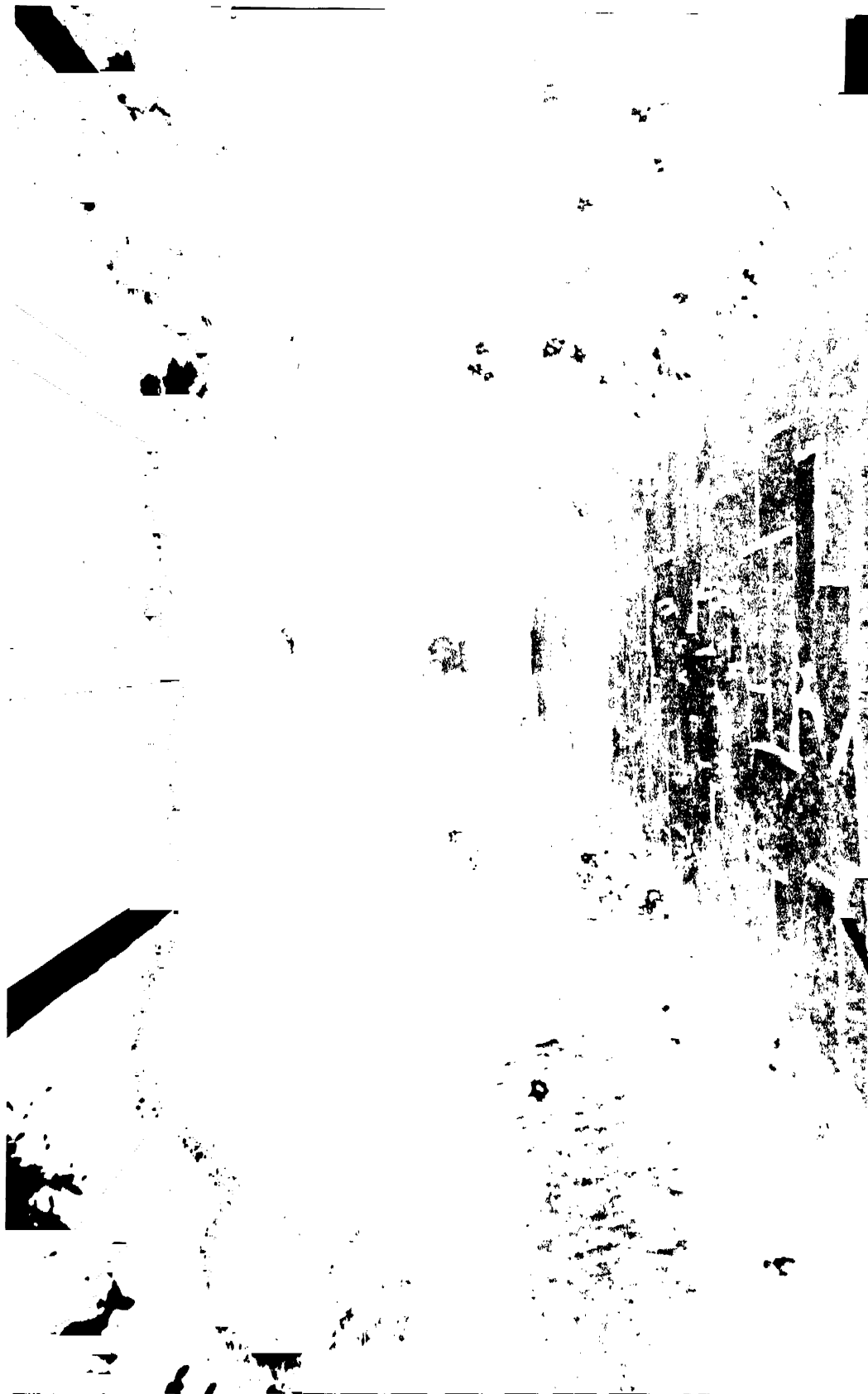
a mass of flowers, water, a noble avenue of trees. Provided it is not sustained, but is come and gone in a flash, the mind, even though experiencing it from day to day, receives a refreshing and stirring stimulus. Drama in any form takes a sudden but purely passing hold of the imagination. There is the pleasure, too, of showing the garden to newcomers. Over visitors, if their stay is short, the spell of the garden cannot easily be thrown, and the touch of drama given by a sequence of sensations is invaluable.

A source of intimacy between man and his garden is scale. Scale is the sense of size that each person associates with the various parts. In certain



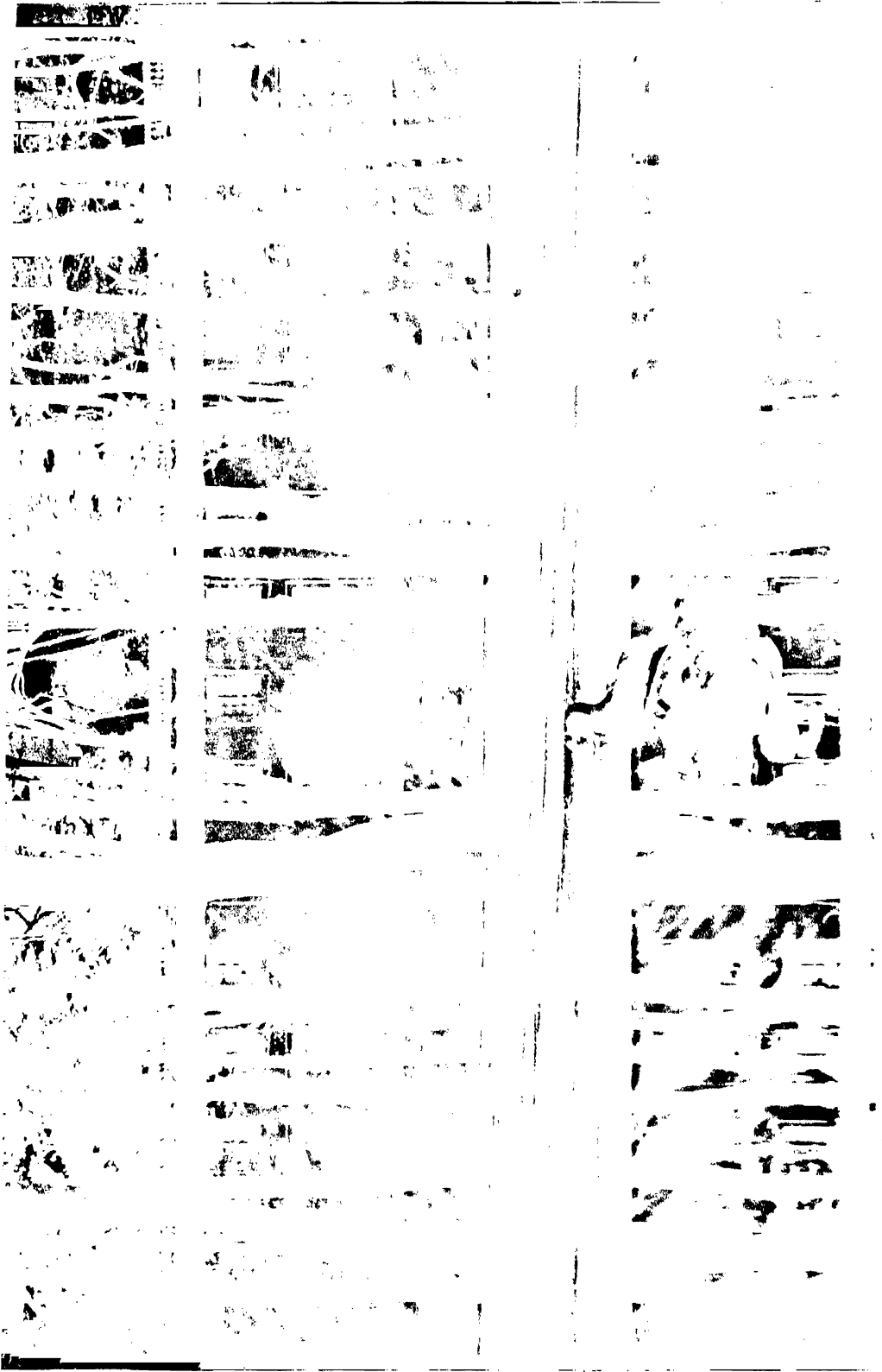
Great Maytham, Kent. (By Sir Edwin Lutyens.)

The View, showing simplicity of foreground.



Great Maytham, Kent.

The flower garden, showing simplicity of background.



Grand Trianon, Versailles.

Vitality and Repose.

PEOPLE AND GARDENS

respects it is fixed, for, like steps, some parts are similar for all humans. Such a size as the width of a grass walk is settled only by personal feeling for space. To one person it may appear narrow; to another it is in perfect tune, and is materialistic and comfortable; to a third, it may appear above human scale and create a suggestion of the sublime. The breadth of a man's mind is implanted in the scale of his garden. But scale again is elusive; mere size is crude. Our walk may become so wide as to appear bare; at once it loses its significance, and what was before a shape suggesting a fine movement is now a space without a meaning. It is unity that pitches the scale. Size and scale have little in common, because a great area may be divided up into a number of small parts, and thus be smaller in scale than a place half its size that has not been divided. The appreciation of size is given by scale: the eye seizes upon a detail, and leaps from this stage by stage to the main idea. The movement is instantaneous, but any stage that is out of scale tends to interfere with its course. A thing in itself has no size to the human eye unless seen in relation to something whose size is definitely known. In nature, a leaf gives the size of the branch that gives the size of the tree. Steps give the size of a flight, that gives the size of a walk, that in turn suggests the size of the scheme.

To a certain extent it follows that the larger the scheme, the higher is the scale pitched, because a greater undertaking is associated with greater ideas. In these larger schemes that are beyond the grasp of one man, there appears a garden that is no longer individual, but collective. This is the entertaining garden, a garden for other people. People are the very essence of its existence. It sweeps away the finer shades of feeling, to represent the feelings of the mass. So strong has been the sensation in gardens designed solely for entertaining, that where in its quieter moments it is a private garden, the owner has found it necessary to make a small personal garden entirely detached from the main scheme. In Italy this small garden was known as the "giardino secreto," and is found in practically every garden laid out in the grand manner. The entertaining garden depends upon constant movement and the intercourse of people. It is a magnificent foil to people magnificently dressed. It is the drama of an



Villa Marlia, Lucca.

Fantasy.

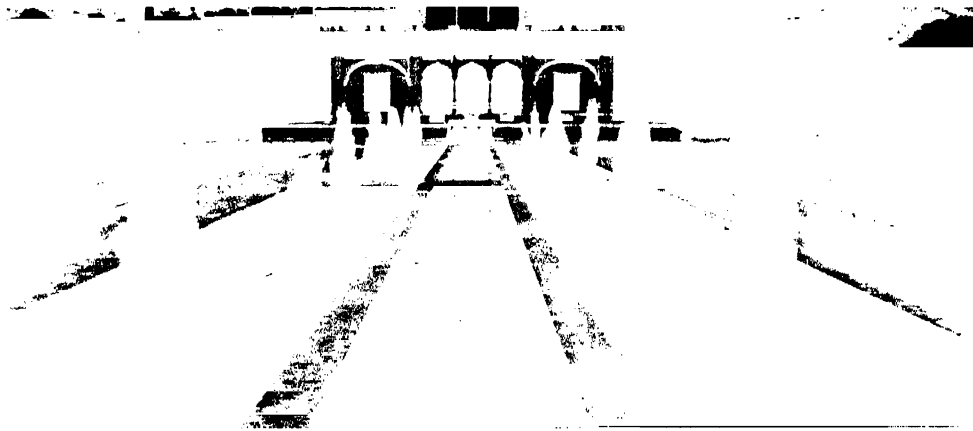
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afternoon or night, and in the passing hours are crammed pleasures of the moment. Great spaces cry aloud for people. Clipped walls of evergreens keep themselves dark and simple. Giant gatepiers, bristling at their tops, herald the passage of people in between. Lines of terraces one above the other provide walks for the throng to move backwards and forwards, looking down upon the extent of people below, or to be seen themselves by those below in tier upon tier. Ramps and stairs intermingle persons one with another, emphasising their movements with their own. Flowers creep away from the main garden, ousted from their position by the spectacle of people. Just as flowers in smaller gardens have been carefully chosen for their position, so are people unified with the architecture. Costumes intermix and play together, and throw up their colours in a constantly changing kaleidoscope. While the main scheme stretches with people gossiping, joking, laughing, so in the parts round about are interests to amuse when they grow weary of conversation. There is a maze where they can lose themselves, a theatre, water gardens, grottos, and all sorts of other surprises. At Marly Louis XIV. built himself such a pleasure garden when he tired of Versailles and the Trianon. The position is a huge natural amphitheatre of the hills, looking out across the winding Seine to the blue hills beyond. In the centre was the King's own house, and on either side stretched six small guest-houses connected by pleached alleys. Behind these were woods that contained all manner of woodland glades and gardens. In front of them terrace upon terrace led down to where a sheet of water lay shimmering under the sky. This beautiful place, resting so luxuriously in the lap of the hills, was ideal to hold the graceful pompous courtiers of the time.

These great gardens carry us out of ourselves to see in the gardens of other lands the character and habits of a nation. In Versailles and Marly there is no personal individuality, no intimate communion between man and nature. The gardens reflect only the glory of the French nation; every weakness is hidden behind a veil of artificiality. In Italy it was different. At the time of the Renaissance individualism was strong enough to break up the country into separate states. A garden was a personal necessity of each man, reflecting the many sides

GARDENS AND DESIGN

of his character; and so it is that Italy has that amazing variety of types each of which is a constant reminder of her intellectualism. European art tells of races that are intensely alive and progressive, where every moment is a step won or lost in civilisation, the south studied and calculating, the north more lyrical. When we cross the Pyrenees into Spain, we find in the patios and Moorish gardens the mysticism that bears us across the seas to the gardens of India and Kashmir. Here were people wrapped in the mystery of life. For generations they remained unchanged, looking upon life as one long rhythm of time. For them the garden played the largest part in their national art and life; it was a symbol of God, of Life and Eternity. Gardens were laid out from the description of Paradise in the Koran, in eight parts or terraces, every tree and flower having its meaning. Their gardens remained simple because they never strove to penetrate beyond what already satisfied them. Colour, flowers, scent, and above all association, must cast over the senses a spell that is hypnotic. It is the beginning of studied emotions, and the proportion of those of repose to those of stimulation is overwhelming. The East can carry us back through the ages in mighty strides. In time we shall come to that first garden, where the problem of art and nature did not exist.



Photo, J. A. J.

At Lahore.

II

ART AND NATURE

We feel but cannot understand the mysteries of nature around. Sunshine, fleecy clouds scudding across the sky, country of every variety and type, trees and foliage that never repeat themselves, forests and hills, colour that passes through the whole range of the spectrum, fields and hedgerows of wild flowers, water in its myriad forms, birds and wild fowl with a colouring as subtle as it is brilliant. To-day all this is beyond us, though once man stepped straight into it from his cave. Now the world is no longer our garden, and we have to make round ourselves an art in sympathy with the artificiality of our existence. For this we draw upon what lies around, and alter it at will. Music is the captured sounds of the earth, and architecture an echo of its forms, but they are far removed from their origin. All that a man stands for is expressed in his building. It is the reflection of his personality and its place in civilisation, and has character of its own. Set it crudely in the midst of country, and trouble arises; it is incongruous. When architecture meets country, and there is peace, some hidden bond of sympathy lies between them. The low, massive Egyptian temples are related to the long bands of sand-dunes among which they rest. The mediæval castle rises sheer and forbidding from its surroundings, a second rock to the one on which it stands. A sailing ship joins clouds and sea by its sails and shapely bulk. These are abstract relations only, but it is certain that into every building that stands alone with any quality of permanency, nature has crept in a hundred different ways. The supreme example of character and contrast in garden work is fairly represented by the palace of Versailles, and the humblest by the peasant's cottage that nestles under a thatched roof. The one is more pronounced than the other, but the relation to nature is the same in principle. The formal house extends to meet its wild surroundings, and the two discuss their differences in the garden. If the one can surprise by coming to the very door of the house, the other can retaliate by penetrating softly into the sacred precincts round about. The garden that is cut off from its immediate surroundings with high walls and levels, and cannot associate with them, may be equally in harmony with its setting. From without it can settle into its surround-



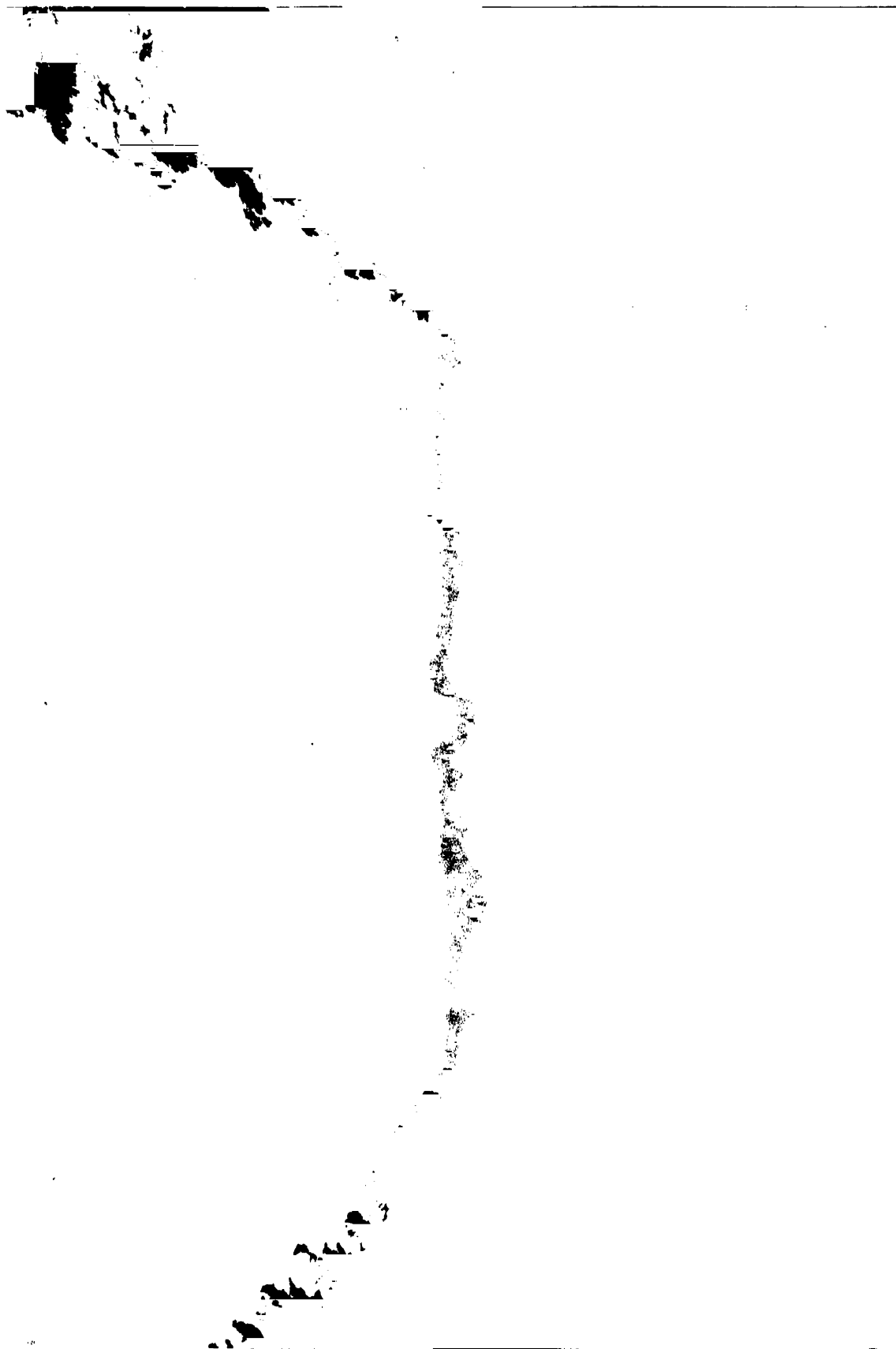
Villa Crivelli, near Milan.

Widely spaced pylons and statuary concentrating interest and carrying formality into the distance.

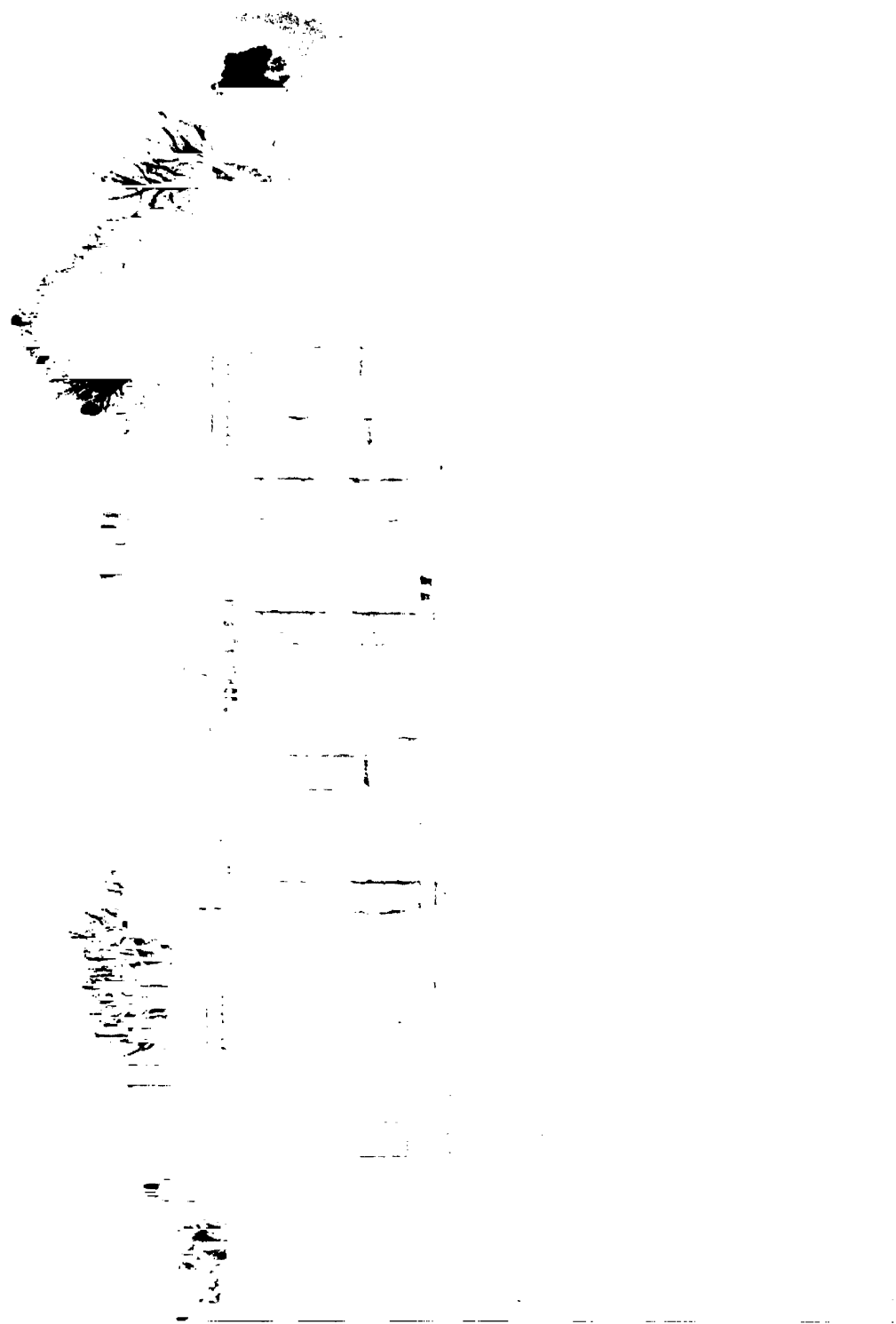
ART AND NATURE

ings by grouping and composition. From within it can leap the foreground and mingle with the view, as the more intimate garden with the neighbouring trees.

Let us first consider how the house extends to meet nature. Many a square block has settled comfortably into the country by spreading diminishing waves of formality. The garden grows less formal as it recedes from the house, finally to disappear imperceptibly. Straight lines are broken and become merely suggested. Lawns and terraces that are as rigid as the rooms they embrace run away into the speckled shadows of trees or the open fields. Paths become less neat. Walks and steps lose their sophistication. Prim beds of flowers give way to flowers running riotously free. Everywhere the dignity of architecture is abandoned. If the extremities of the garden become naturalistic too quickly, the house plants outposts of formality to maintain its presence, breakwaters round which floods the country. It is one of the functions of sculpture to spread the house through the garden. Although in isolated places sculpture expresses the poetry of nature, its material and artificiality give the hint that after all a building is at hand. The avenues and vistas that extend from a house spread its formality over a wider area. The avenues of Badminton radiated from the house and fastened it somewhat crudely to half a county. More sympathetic is the vista that is maintained by clumps of trees or undergrowth. These clumps grow less formal as they recede, and in the far distance merge into the landscape. At Sutton Place the yews advance down the central walk, and on either side the wild grass sweeps up to meet the smooth. A definite scheme of architectural features placed along the avenues punctuates the distances and lends formality and interest. A vista may be suggested simply by opening a way through reasonably wooded country. In Italy widely spaced twin cypresses are planted, that carry the eye over an unlimited distance of otherwise natural country. In a garden there is nothing so inviting as a walk that runs out into the view, missing the middle distance, for it leads the eye far away from its immediate surroundings. On the other hand, it is possible to consider a house and garden emerging from, rather than into, their surroundings. Nature is the direct source of inspiration, and from its depths the garden comes bubbling forth, takes



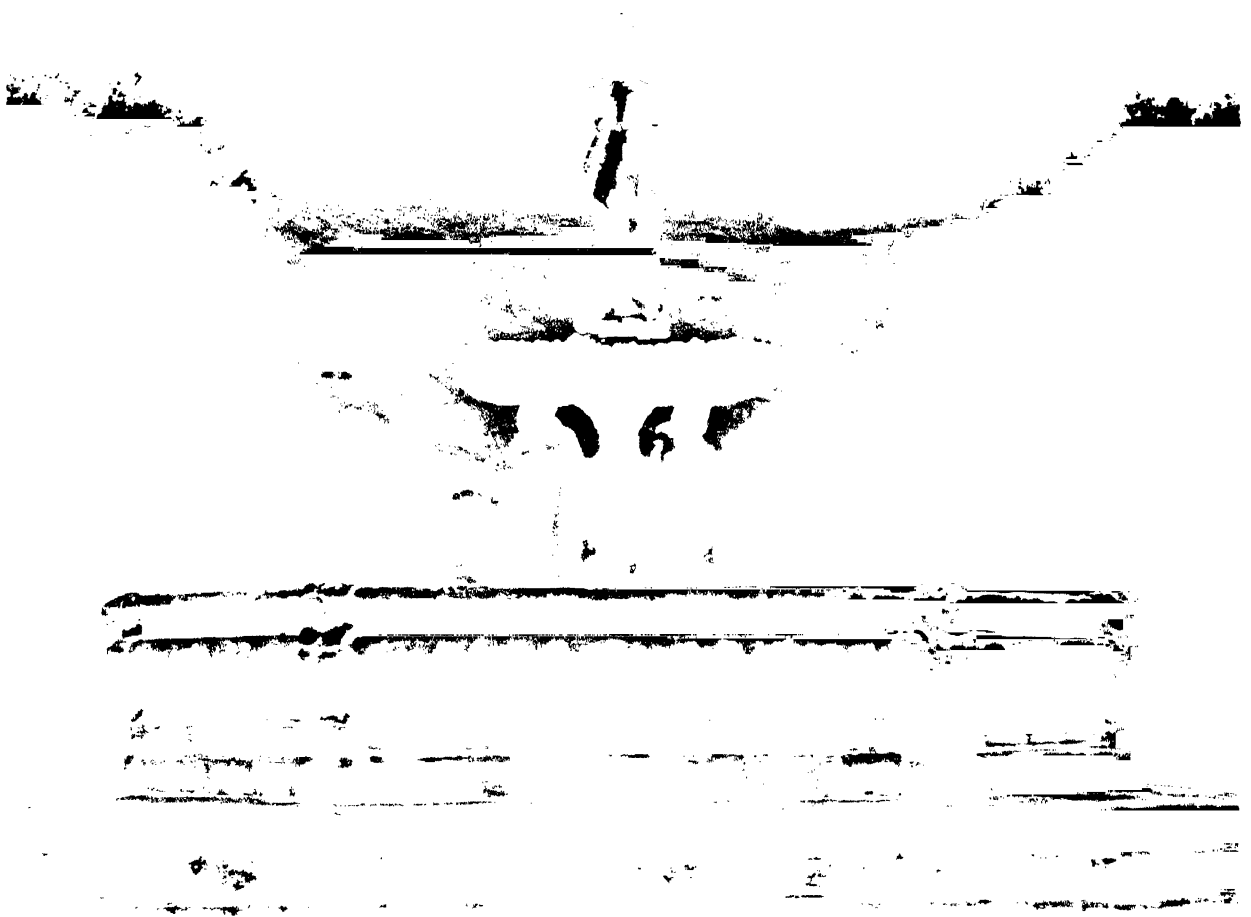
Ven House, Somerset.
Bold introduction between architecture and nature



Photo, F. R. Yebury.

Sutton Place, Surrey.

Subtle introduction between architecture and nature.



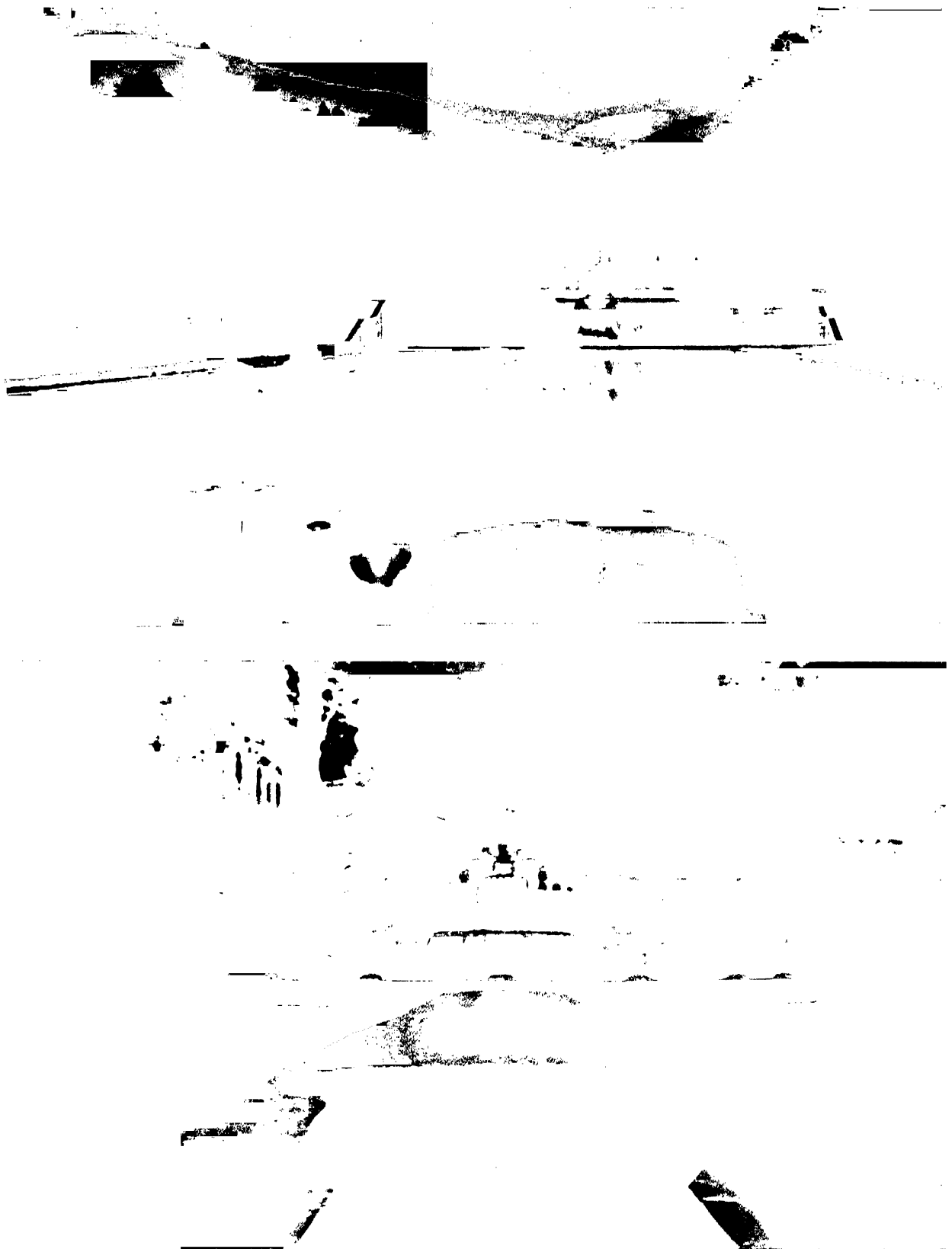
Villa Bernardini, Lucca.

Sympathy of sculpture to distant natural surroundings.

ART AND NATURE

itself more seriously as it approaches, grows dignified, and at last merges into the full stateliness of architecture. Only on rare occasions is such a conception possible. The gardens at La Granja in Spain come out of the hills, while at the Villa Lante in Italy the wooded slopes conspire to send down to the town of Bagnaia a garden that is possibly the finest in the country.

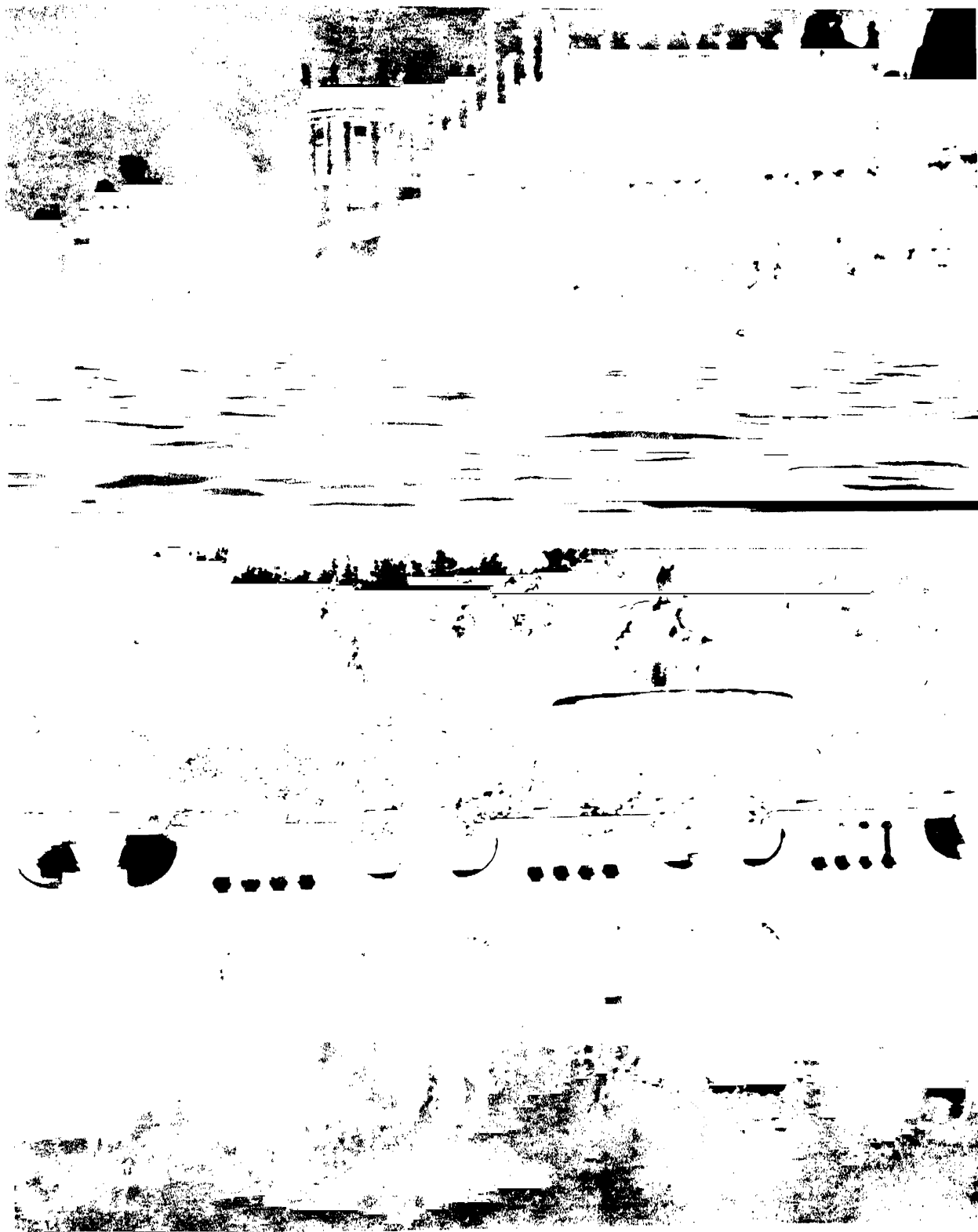
To entice the countryside into the garden requires more subtlety, and perhaps the first need is for a garden set openly to reflect the scale and character of its surroundings. The gardens at Frascati are view-gardens overlooking the sweep of the Roman Campagna, and they have absorbed something of its splendour. No view in England has a similar scale, and with the country split up into hedges and trees, meadows and roads, the gardens it contains are smaller and more personal. Country may have a character that cannot be ignored, stamping the garden in its own likeness. The gardens of Japan are set in a land of hills and hillocks, whose character is so dominating that it seems as though plants and architecture swing in unison. The long lines of the hill terraces in Spain and elsewhere that have been made since immemorial times for planting have demanded horizontal lines of any garden in their midst, whether constructionally necessary or not. The chessboard of meadows in an English plain suggests the simple rectangle shapes of the traditional garden. Similarly, parts of a less pronounced country find their counterpart in parts of the garden. The parterre of the terrace at Cuzzano near Verona is shared with the whole valley, and its pattern is a culmination to the endless furrows chasing along the hillside. The broad sweep of the bowling green at Bingham's Melcombe recalls into the heart of the garden the meadow across the way, over which it is looking. A stretch of water that is not reflecting its immediate surroundings imprisons light and plants upon the ground a portion of the ever-changing sky. Ornament is susceptible to nature and can become the formal embassy of its surroundings. Sculpture in an open plain is broad and distant, exuding the breath of the view. The fountain that stands before the Villa Bernardini in Italy helps to draw into the garden the hills behind with which it contrasts. In a wood sculpture tells of the mystery of trees, echoing their lines in its own. The nymph



Above : La Granja, Spain. Garden emerging from woods.

Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Below : Villa Lante, Italy. Garden emerging intimately from trees. *Photo, F. Inigo Thomas.*

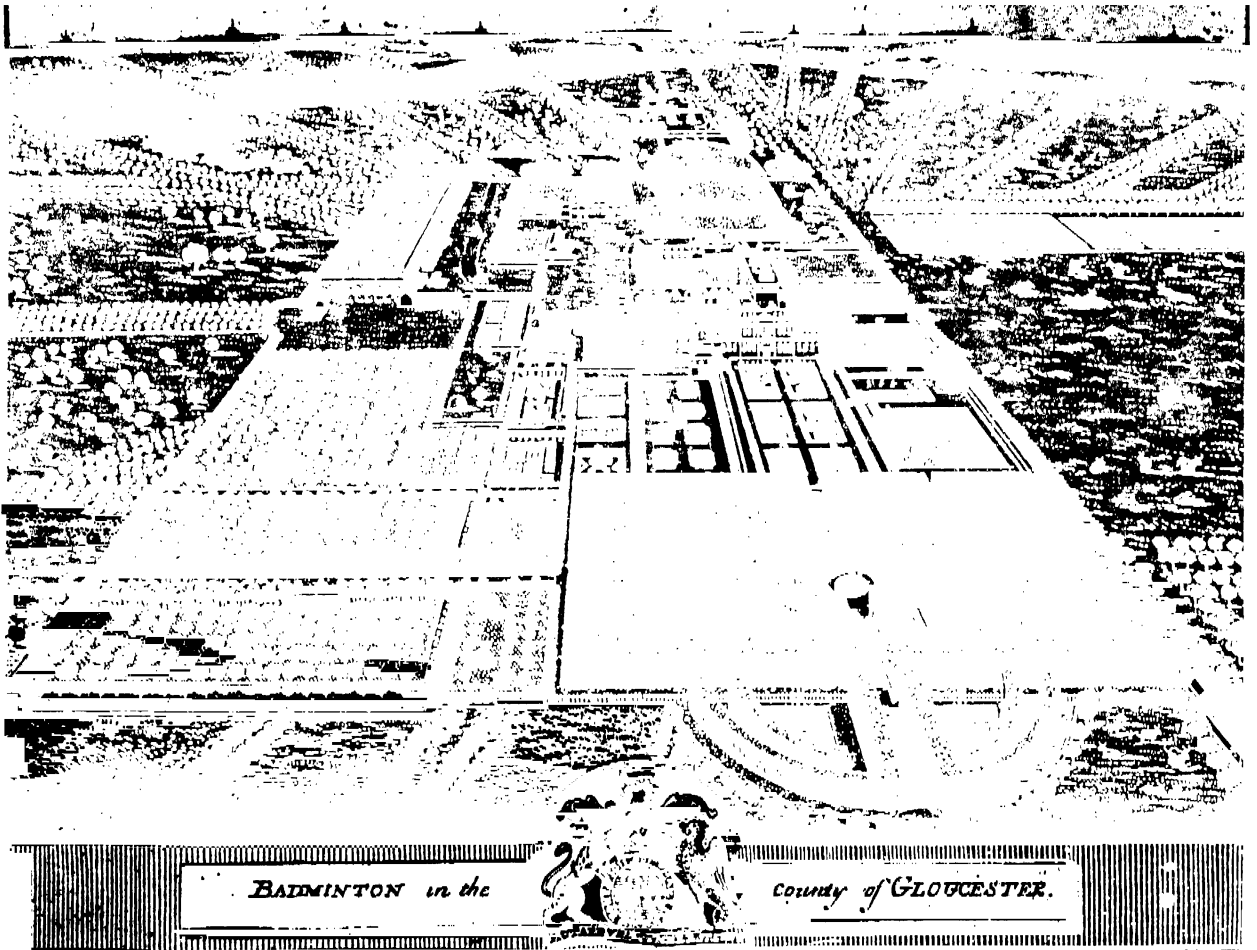


Above : Isola Bella, Lago Maggiore. Affinity of terraces to the surface of the water.

Below : Boboli Gardens, Florence. Affinity of detail to water.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

floating on the water in the garden near Stockholm mates with water-lilies. Intimate decoration reflects the flowers and foliage beside it, planting upon the surface of buildings what has already been planted in the garden. Baroque artists in Italy penetrated into this spirit of nature and interpreted it frankly in their work. Their love of movement and drama led them specially to seek



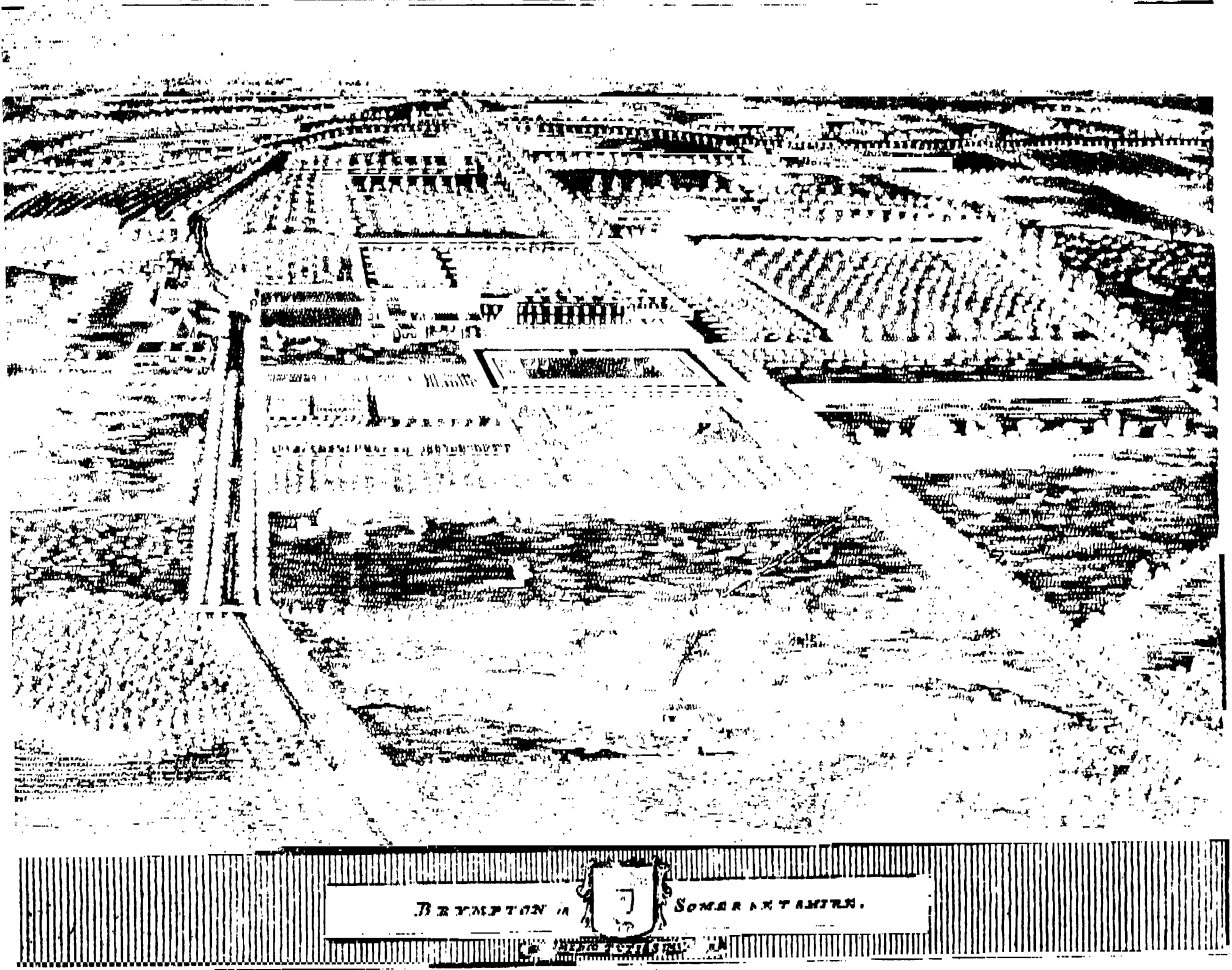
Badminton, Gloucestershire.

Avenues fastening the gardens to the countryside.

out the emotions of water. They seized upon its gaiety and held it in the laughing curves of fountains. They perpetuated the ripples for ever playing across the lakes in the steps and stairways that link their gardens to the water. They built the long terraces that belong, not to the hills and mountains from which they are hewn, but to the flatness of water from which they rise. The island of Isola

ART AND NATURE

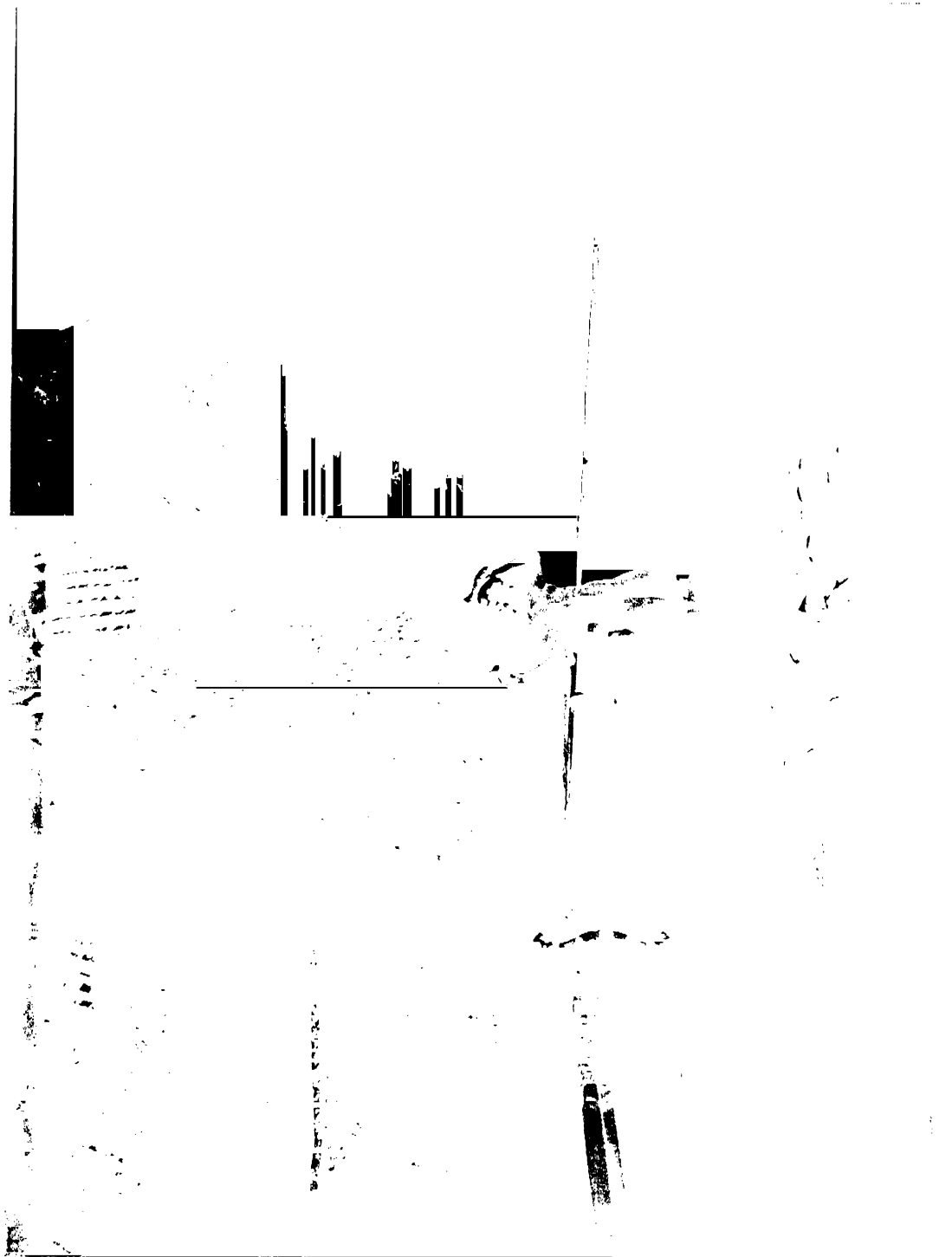
Bella, with its tier upon tier of terraces, floats for ever upon the surface of Lake Maggiore. These are more or less things of the imagination, but the country is more clearly a part of the garden when its own materials are used, the living trees and shrubs and plants, local bricks and stone, and water. Water slips into the garden fresh from nature, varies its mood at will from light frivolity to utter



Brympton, Somerset.

A traditional English garden settling into a country of meadows.

gloom, and slips out again as brisk and bright as ever. It is the most versatile of all materials. It disappears and reappears, and in a moment its clamour has become the song of the garden, and its waywardness the countless different forms of pattern. With trees, the slender forms of palms are as much at home among the echoing minarets and flat plains of the East as the firs among the



Photo, F. R. Yebury.

Garden of Carl Milles, Stockholm.

Relation of sculpture to intimate natural surroundings.

ART AND NATURE

mountain peaks and châteaux of Switzerland. Both are at a loss in a healthy English country of rolling downs and rounded trees, where everything is robust and rich and luscious, and where the circumstances that gave their shape no longer exist. Imported specimens need not be as out of place as these. The cypress is generally at home in any garden, not because it reflects nature so much as the formality of architecture. Remove the cypress from a very formal garden setting in England, and it is as much out of place in its own way as a fir. Such rare foreign trees as tulip are magnificent in an English garden, for their shape is both formal and sympathetic to indigenous trees. All trees and plants, whether imported or not, are subject to design as soon as they enter the sphere of the garden. Design composes trees in relation to their formal surroundings and introduces foliage as grouping or as pure pattern over the formal lines of architecture, softening them by colour, light and shade. Formal hedges and lawns are the threshold of the house. Here nature is all the healthier for being in submission, and so the trees enjoy their clipping, and the lawns their mowing and rolling. Clipped hedges with their form are of all living materials probably the most related to the solidity of the house. Their texture is a consideration. While a yew hedge has a great beauty from varying shades of surface that mark each tree, a privet hedge is so close grained that in comparison it appears dull. Flowers are very sensitive to their position. Foreign flowers that need special treatment seem to repel their surroundings and create round themselves an atmosphere of their own. The flowers that are most at home are those that once grew wild in the country round, and have been tended and cared for. The old English rose is a brother of the brier rose, to which it returns if left unattended. Honeysuckle can cover the walls more profusely than it grows in the hedgerows. Similarly flowers and plants are more in place where the soil has not been specially laid. In very formal gardens some flowers may still be in character, although foreign. Tulips are from Persia, but, like the cypress tree, they are beautiful in most gardens because of their formality. While an herbaceous border is for all comers, flowers in a garden have a strong sense of social scale. Hydrangeas are so rich and overwhelming that they claim a magnificent position;



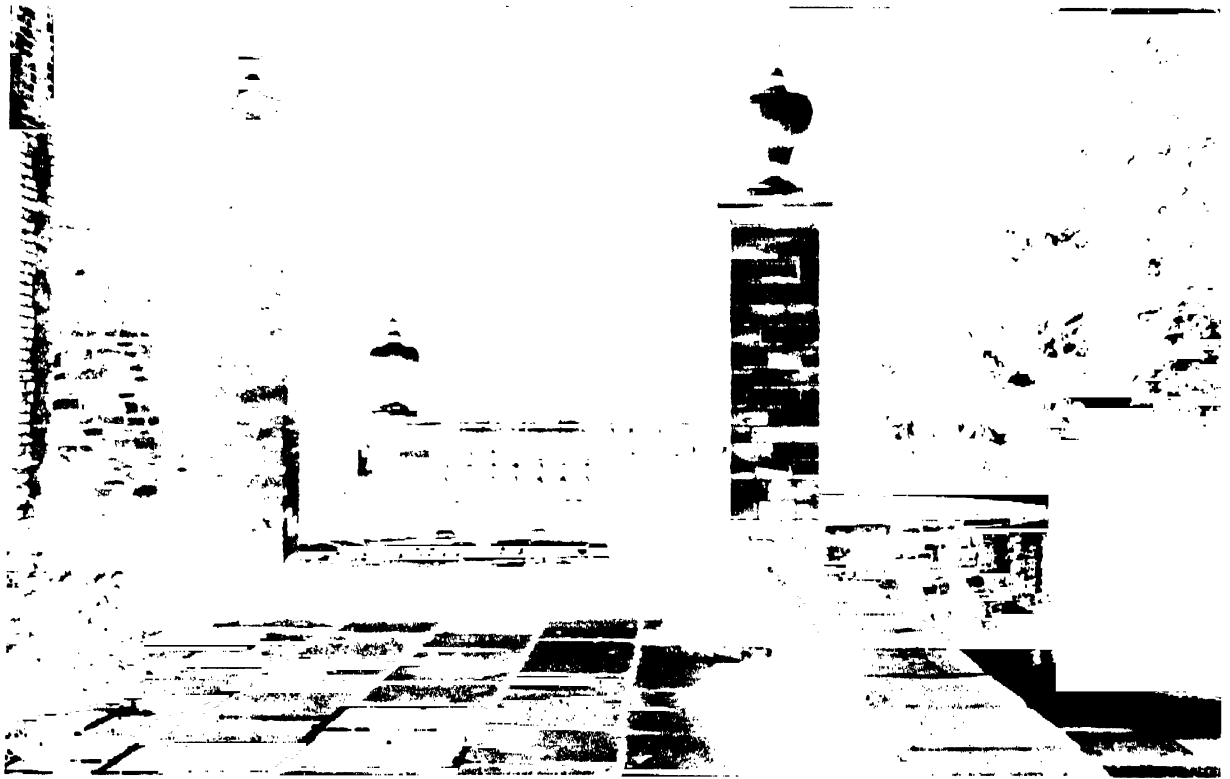
Photo, F. P. Yerbury

Fountain in the Courtyard, Fredericksborg Castle, Denmark.

Water-spouts arranged in relation to setting.



Marshcourt, Hampshire.
Hedges carrying on the solidity of architecture.



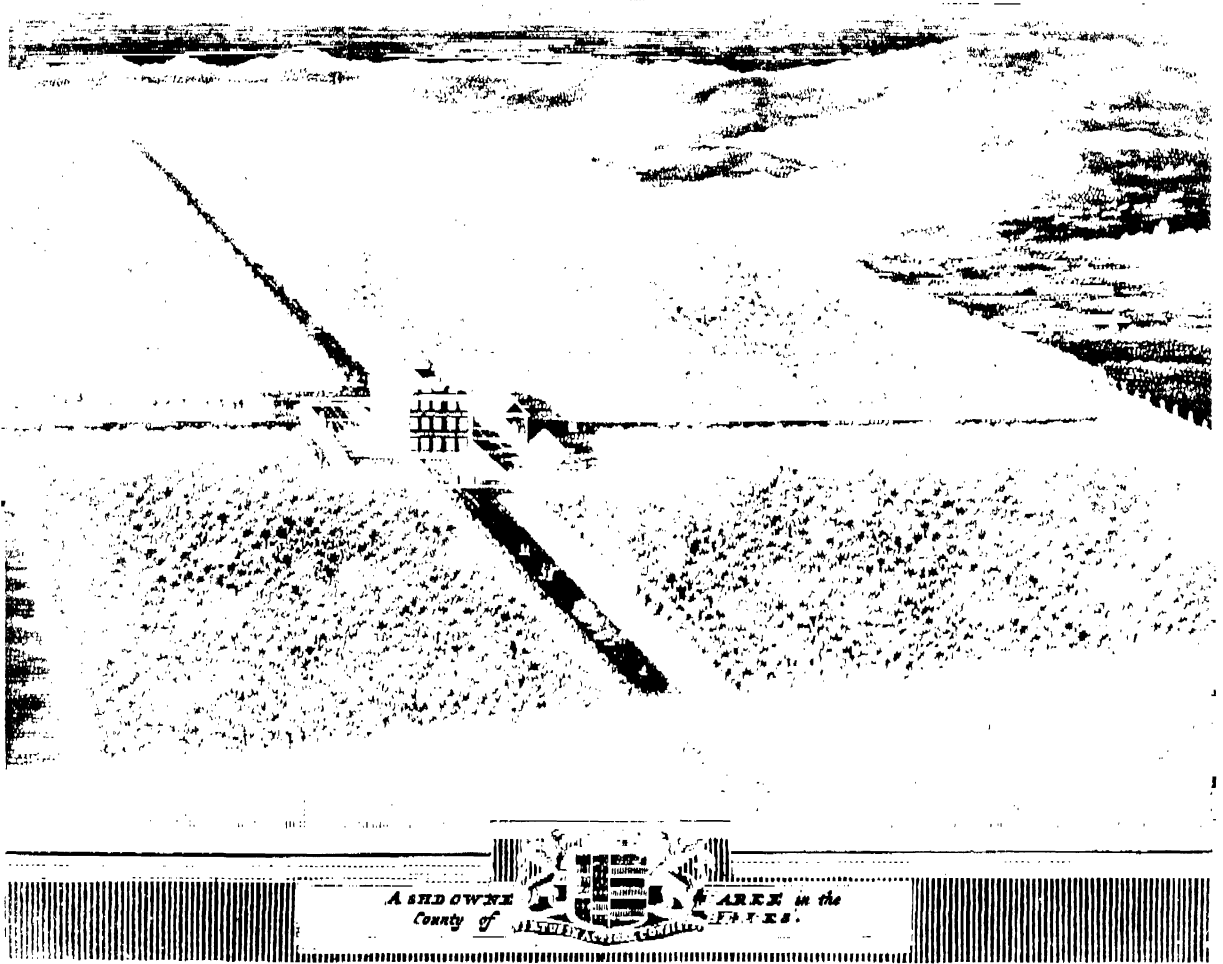
Above : Little Bognor, Sussex. (By C. Williams-Ellis.) Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Below : Cicogna, North Italy.

Relation through a similar character of free-growing planting to architecture.

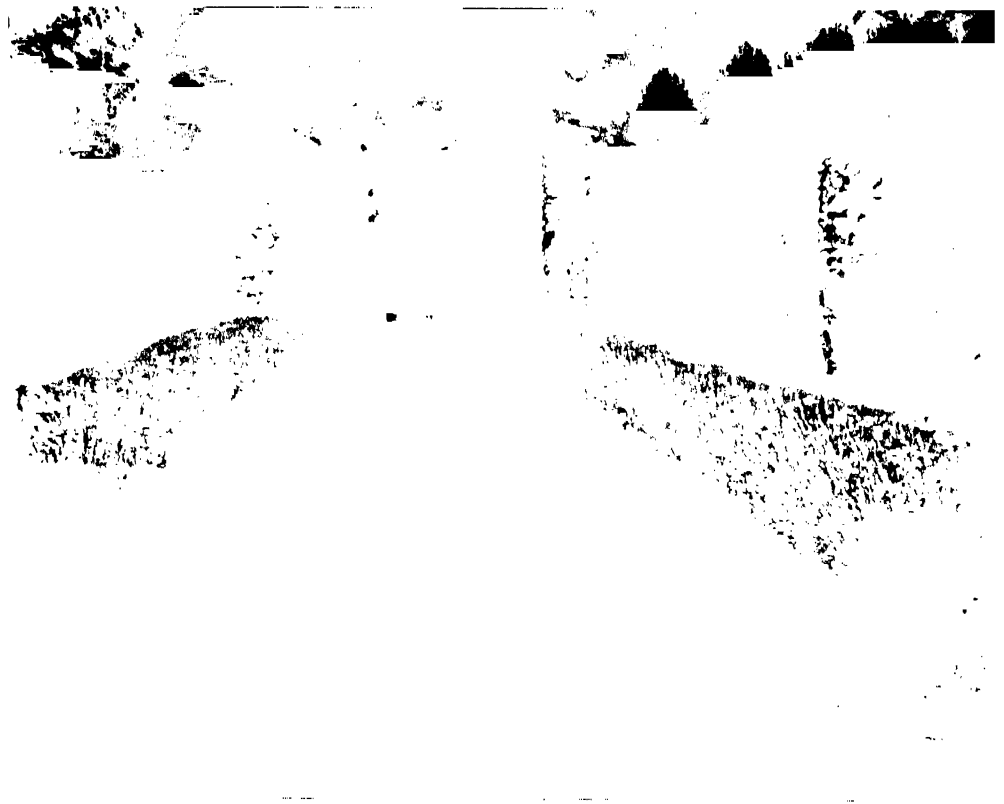
ART AND NATURE

they have, in fact, become almost a part of the architecture. But it is more the solidity of the garden that brings it into relation with the ground upon which it stands. For this reason the use of local materials makes the buildings appear as though they too have sprung from the soil; and the more natural the surface of the material the closer do they belong. If the country is chalk, the whiteness



Ashdown Park, Berkshire.

of chalk stands out clear and refreshing; and because a chalk quarry has occasional ribs of flint, the surface of buildings will be softened if some of this is introduced as pattern. In Northamptonshire the rich yellow stone hewn locally is integral with the countryside, just as by the seaside pebbles recall the shore into the garden. The design of details has a direct bearing on their materials. Stone

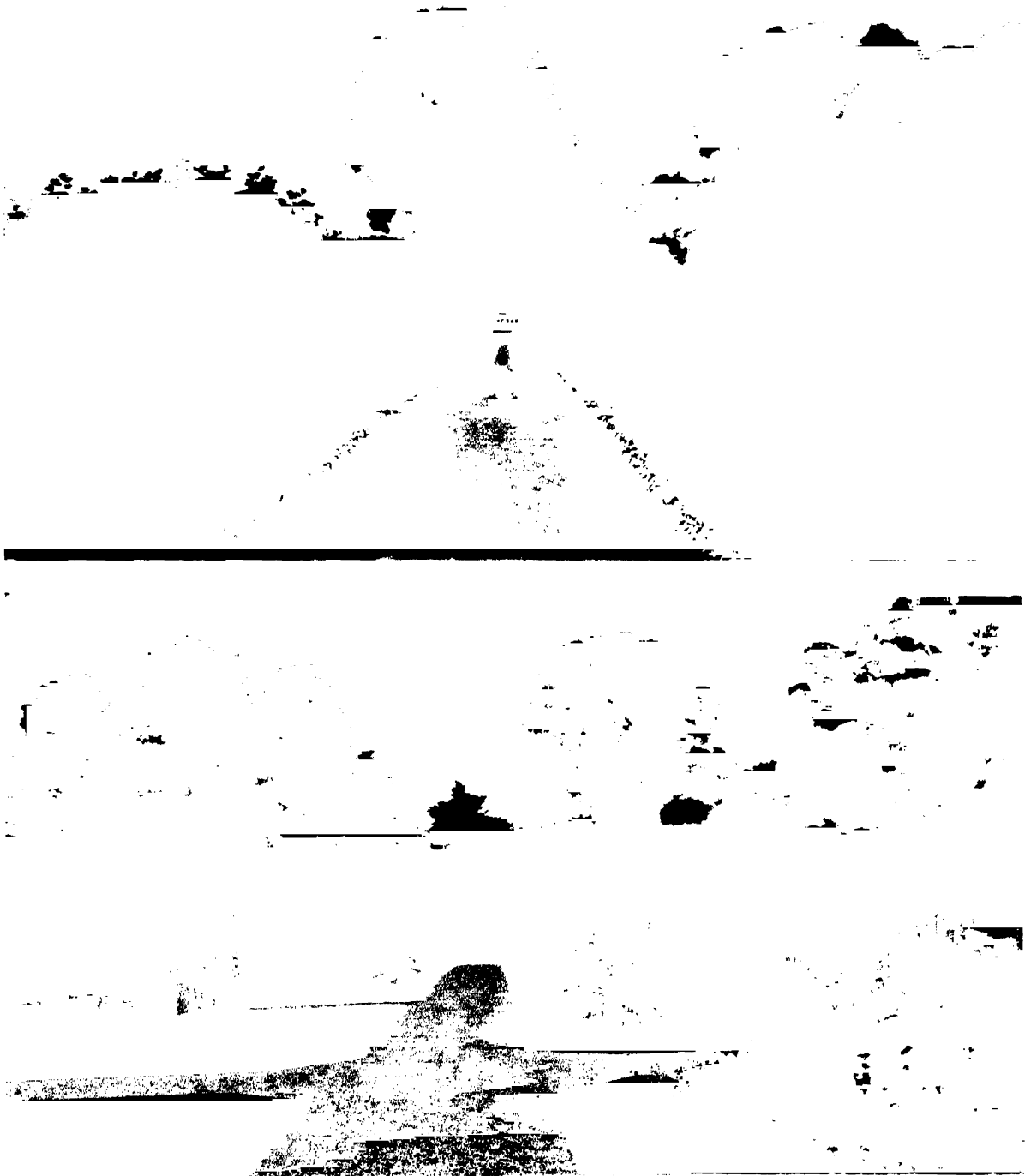


Above : Alington Castle, Kent. (By Philip Tilden.)

Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Below : Compton Wynyates, Warwickshire.

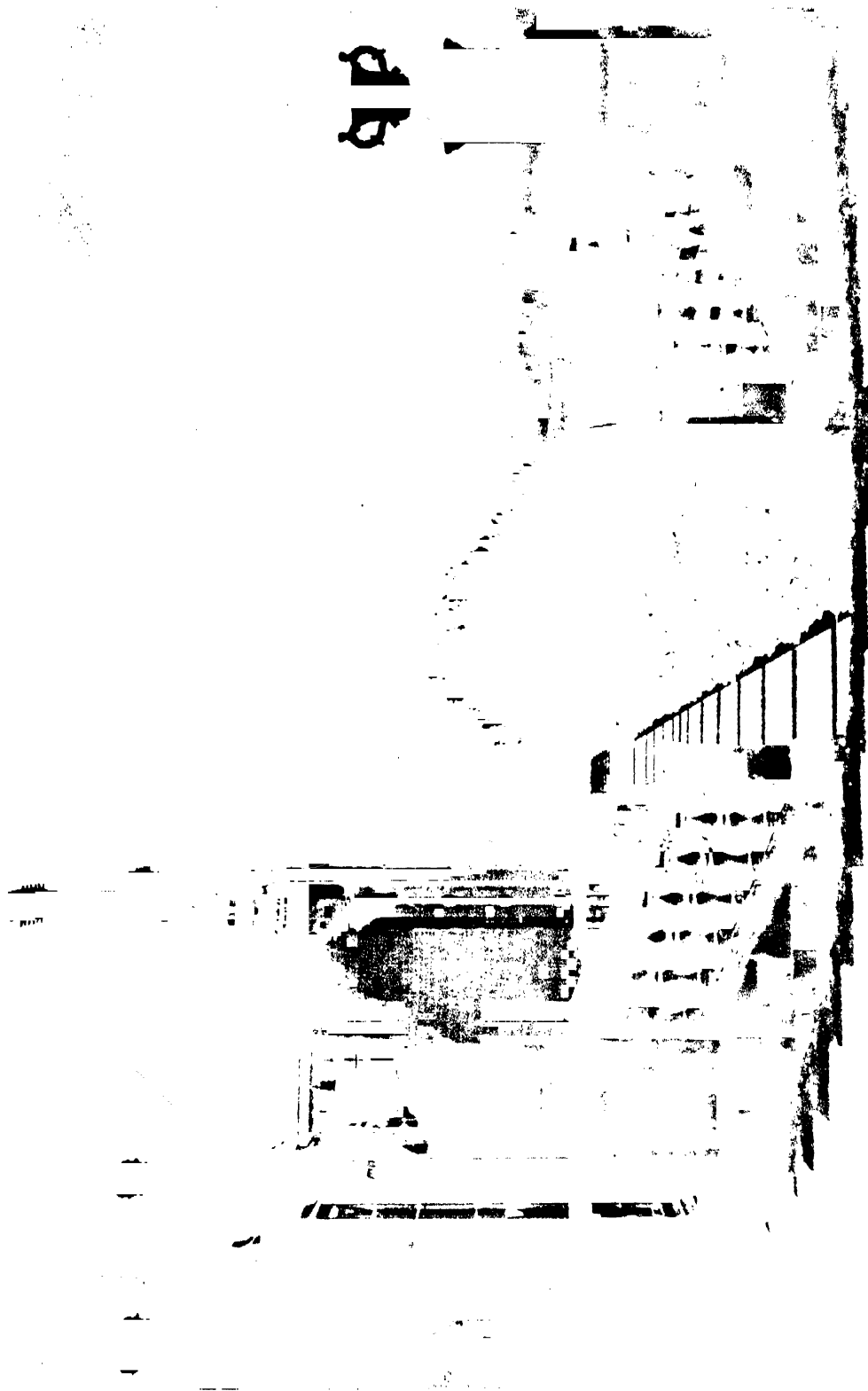
Introduction into the garden of external natural features.



Above : Kevington, Kent.

Below : Packwood, Warwickshire.

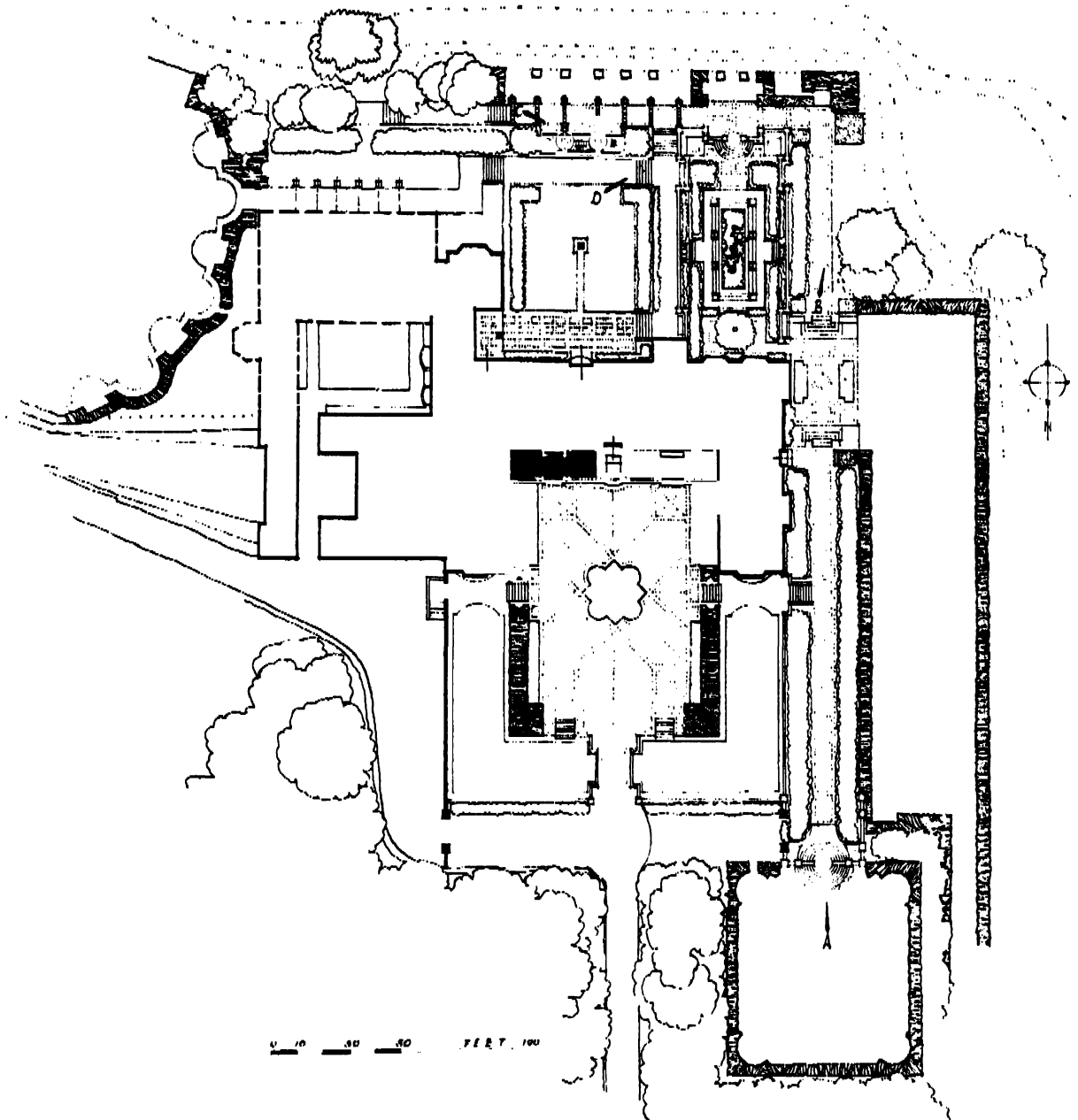
Skyline of trees above a simple enclosed garden.



Marshcourt.

The walk from the North Terrace: Viewpoint A on plan.

ART AND NATURE



Marshcourt, Hampshire. (By Sir Edwin Lutyens.)

A beautifully balanced plan designed for the spur of a hill, the ground falling sharply south and west to a wide view.

suggests strength and ruggedness; wood suggests airy shapes of pergolas; bricks emphasise their standard size and make, by simple pattern. Of all the ways we have of inviting nature into the garden, none is so sure as that of time. Time has seriously to be reckoned with in design. When the garden is first com-

GARDENS AND DESIGN

pleted, it inclines to be empty, for if highly finished at the outset by architectural features, the growth of nature may only create confusion by over-interest. But time casts over all an ever-increasing web of nature that continues to draw the garden together as the years go by.

The garden is closely related in its design to any natural features that are outside its boundaries, but whose presence must always exert some influence. A frame steadies a picture and brings it into relation with its architectural surroundings. Windows of a room do the same to a view outside. In a far wider and more versatile way a garden can pick and choose, and decide upon the portion of the view it wishes to include. Where every prospect pleases it can embrace all; though it soon discovers that the limiting of a view often increases the drama. It can blot out offending parts, or reduce the distance to an object. The windmill seen from the garden at Compton Wynyates, in Warwickshire, has now become the centre of an interesting picture; while at Alington Castle the trees are even more an integral part of the design. In the same way a distant object is brought perceptibly nearer when seen from the end of an enclosed walk that is pointing towards it. Foreground is the intermediary between oneself and the view, and ways are found to increase the interest and quality of the distance. The frame may simply mean that the middle distance has been cut out and the panorama stretches above a steady foreground line. A pair of oaks carefully placed frame in a view a grove of oaks as efficiently as yews frame a sheet of water. The former is related by unison, the latter by contrast. The frame gains in drama if so placed that there is a contrast of space between itself and the picture. The piers that frame the country near Florence are placed at the end of an avenue of cypresses, the moment before the ground dips away into space (page 27). The frame of any picture should be in every way worthy of its purpose; if it is too small it is a nuisance, and if too great it tends to keep out the view by overpowering and detracting from it. These gate-piers with their slender points give the entire meaning to the hills behind. The wings of a house that so often build round three sides of a courtyard enclose a view that is vigorous enough to need such a frame. If, on the other hand, a view is too



Marshcourt, Hampshire.

Above : The opening to the south-west: Viewpoint B on plan.
Below : The Pergola: Viewpoint C on plan.



Marshcourt, Hampshire.

From the Upper Terrace: Viewpoint D on plan.

ART AND NATURE

overpowering, it is broken up into a number of smaller and constantly changing pictures by detached points. A row of yews, a pergola, or even the stems of trees, answer to this and repeat the idea of the glazing bars of the house by carrying across the enclosing lines of the garden. At Marshcourt, in Hampshire, the house is set on the spur of the hills, with a view to the south across a short valley and to the west along a length of the valley of the Tees. The walk that leads round the house on these two sides handles the view skilfully. The terrace at the extreme north, a viewpoint over the country round, is a bare lawn enclosed by rigid yew hedges about four feet high that cut off the middle distance. From this square, steps descend into a long enclosed vista, at first confined to flowers and architectural interests. Beyond the house the enclosing walls are suddenly omitted, and the ground falls away abruptly, almost precipitously after so much protection, to reveal the view. At the turn of the walk, which is again enclosed, there is a recess in the yew, from which a narrow way leads into an alcove facing south. House, garden, flowers, walks—all are forgotten in this remote little place. Out of this by the same way the walk continues to the east, with occasional glimpses of the view through clipped yew squares, until it reaches the pergola. Through the piers and cross-pieces overhead the view and sky are seen with a comfortable sense of security. The walk then plunges into the darkness of trees, up some steps, and so on to the upper terrace, where garden and view share the open situation.

While there is lateral introduction between the house and surroundings, there is also vertical introduction, the garden considered as a link between ground and sky. The sky line is a definite pattern. The dark undersides of trees that soar up and spread out their branches, contrast with the sky itself, for sky, like a view, is appreciated all the more if it is occasionally excluded. Stone pines in the Borghese gardens at Rome send down shadows from their height, and by giving a sense of protection from above to the seats, open out the arena to the skies. At Kevington, in Kent, and Packwood, in Warwickshire, the elms appearing beyond the walls weave patterns against the sky that give much of the charm to the wall gardens below. The woodland garden

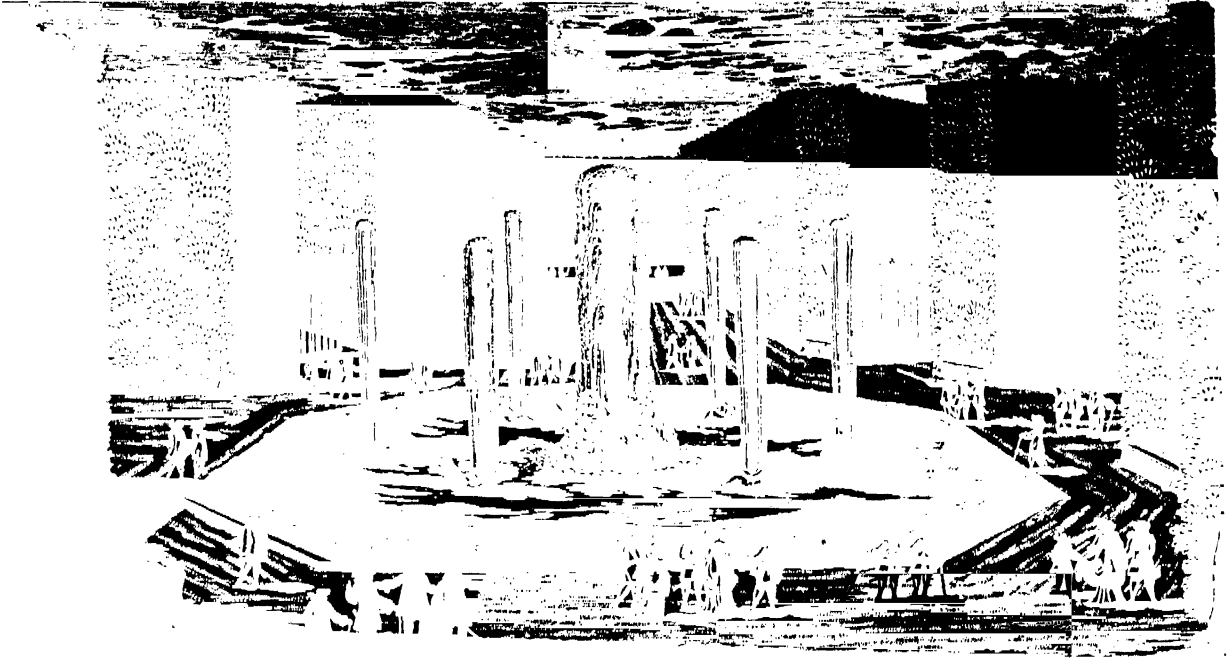


Borghese Gardens, Rome.

Umbrella pines breaking up and framing the sky above the Arena

GARDENS AND DESIGN

of the grand Trianon at Versailles is a beautiful intermingling of sky and ground. Shadows of passing clouds have a subconscious interest in small gardens, but in places like Versailles or an English park, where a vast area can be seen at once, the shadows that chase across the ground reflect the interest overhead. With all these arts at command to soften the house and its surroundings, there is the chance that sympathy may be overdone. The character of architecture is



Versailles: Basin of Ceres.

The solidity of hedges.

firmness, and too much planting and broken line may destroy the beautiful contrast that is the vitality of the garden. Flowers at the base of a building may weaken the house where it should be strongest, if the architectural lines that bind it to the ground have been concealed by their profusion. Similarly, too much architecture in the immediate vicinity may nullify its purpose. The firmest base to a house is probably the levelled stretch of lawn that often lies spread before the towers and gables and chimneys of a Tudor or Elizabethan mansion.



Grand Trianon, Versailles.

Intermingling of ground and sky by trees and water.

ART AND NATURE

This straight lawn is already a brother to the undulating meadows around. In the same way the boundaries can suffer from too soft a line between the garden and nature. The ha ! ha ! was a surprise packet of the eighteenth century, a sunk ditch across which the garden swept into the country. At Ven House, the point is delicately but firmly marked where the main road passes the entrance gates and separates garden from park. Often the garden loses its character through lack of decision at these points. The balance between ruthlessness and sympathy needs to be very carefully adjusted and must depend upon the circumstances of the moment. If nature at that moment is dull and lifeless, cold and forbidding, then it should be closed out altogether with those same high walls that enclosed the monastery gardens of old, when it was death to commune with nature. It must depend upon how each one of us regards country. Probably it is always more pleasant to consider nature smiling, and for us to enjoy it while we can.

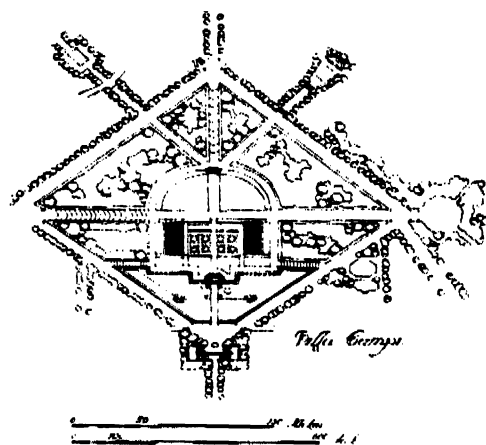


Ven House, Somerset.



The Paradise Carpet.

Although probably made for Shah Abbas in the seventeenth century, the design goes back at least to Chosroes I., the Sassanian King of Persia (A.D. 531-579). Such gardens as the Shalimar (page 68) and the Nishat Bagh (page 22) are concrete examples of the Paradise garden from which the design is drawn. (See "Gardens of the Great Mughals," by C. M. Villiers Stuart.)



Villa Campi.

III

UNITY

A garden is composed of an incredible variety of elements. Nature alone introduces intricacies that happen in no other art, and flowers and plants and trees, and the subtleties of introduction, easily lead to confusion. The garden, however, is primarily a work of art, and therefore in its initial stages built on pattern. The form of the garden gives the character, and the difficulties may be the inspiration, but the principles of its design are those of any visual pattern. The Persian carpet has little significance other than pure pattern, yet it is practically the design of a Persian garden. From a Persian garden to Le Nôtre is another step in the history of pattern, and from there to the Villa Gamberaia or Marshcourt (page 57) is still another. It is at this point that the more elastic sister arts leave garden architecture behind, probably because those very intricacies call for a simple basis. However involved the garden may be on the surface, its pattern lies underneath, simple and restful in its unity.

Though theme and rhythm decide the type, disposition, and scale of the design, it is left to balance to turn it into composition. A four-square scheme like the Villa Campi, near Florence, turns perpetually on its equal axes, and the focus of interest is in its centre. Similarly, less symmetrical schemes turn about their centres, upon axes that may or may not be stressed. In a picture, line and

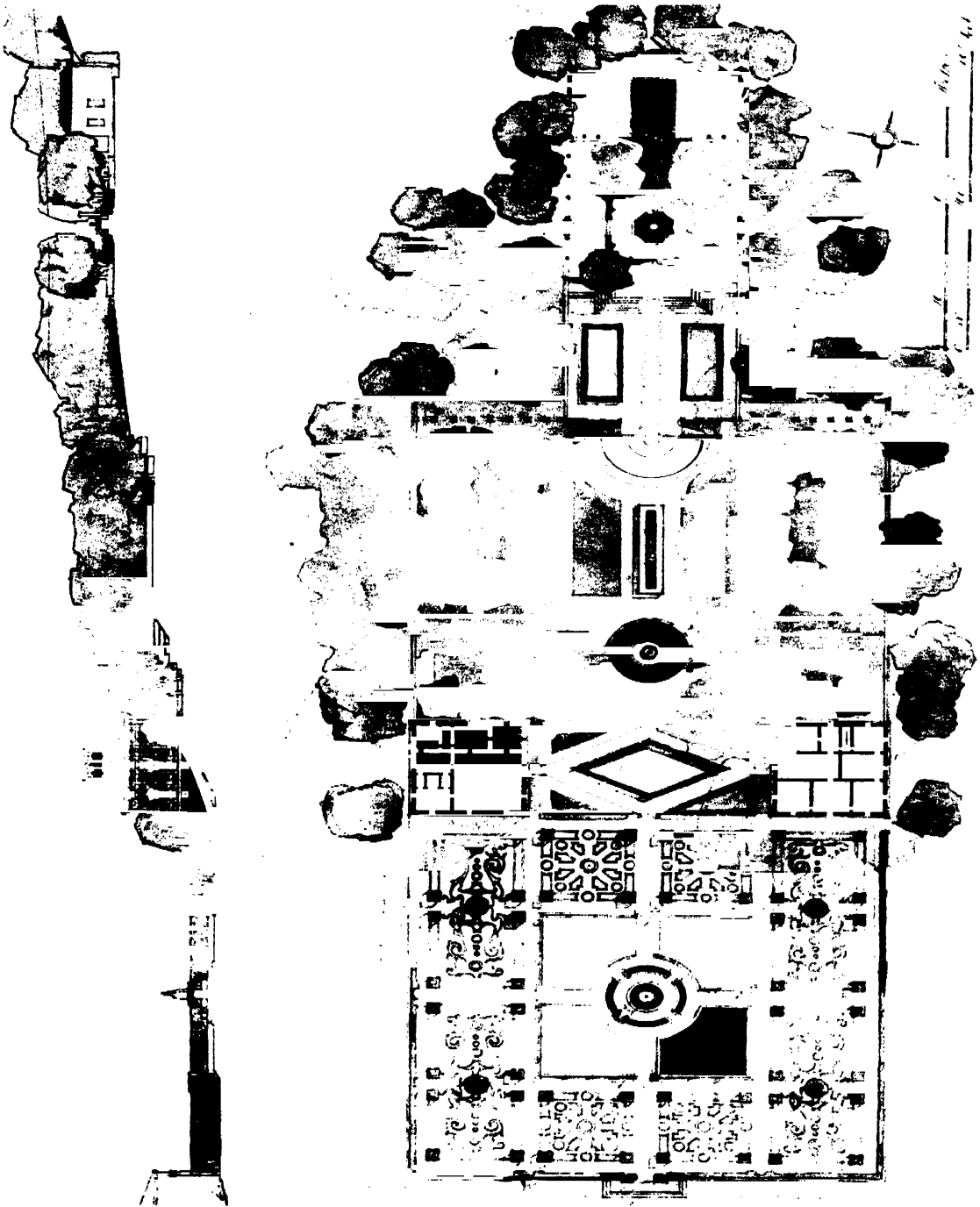


Shalimar, Lahore.

Expression of the Persian carpet (page 66) with logical design of watercourses.

UNITY

counter-line wrestle with each other within their allotted limits, neither gaining supremacy. The centre round which they turn is sometimes a focus of interest which draws the eye quicker to its place of rest, and holds it there. Proportion of the parts not only gives life and interest to the whole, but adjusts the balance. A part that is small in shape and rich in interest balances one of a very much larger size that is without interest. Distance from the centre, type, and quality, all have their influence. Parts are proportional one to another in carefully adjusted quantities and shapes, avoiding competition or overmuch contrast, but allowing a little discord to increase the sense of unity. This is the spirit of design, and its relation to the garden is as intimate as to a picture. The parts become spaces, linked together by lines of circulation, and details such as steps, flower-beds, walls, sculpture, conform to make the elements of a vast pattern. The parts that are solid take their positions of importance in the plan. Just as the Shalimar with all its waterways grows from a flat picture similar to the carpet, so the whole scheme merges slowly into the three-dimensional massing of architecture. The pattern of the garden does not necessarily want to be too strong; at once, though the unity of the whole may be perfect, there is a sense of oppression. One of the most elaborate examples in the world is Versailles, where the Grand Canal hangs like a great jewel from the palace. This main scheme is capable of holding all the variety of elements that happen on either side. A more subtle example from Italy is the Villa Dona Dalle Rosa, at Valzanzibio, where a number of minor interests are held together by two cross axes. The scheme in itself has to be not merely well balanced, but consistent in character. Anything in the way of a "shape" will be out of place in a cottage garden, which is not sufficiently artificial for so rich a thing as a curve. The character is its ingenuousness. The traditional English garden is square in its idea and character, and even here the introduction of a curve is an event that is very important. On the other hand, French gardens before the eighteenth century were highly artificial, and in every little village round Paris gardens laid out were rich in shape and curves, beside which the English gardens of the same period seem heavy-handed. During the Baroque in Italy,

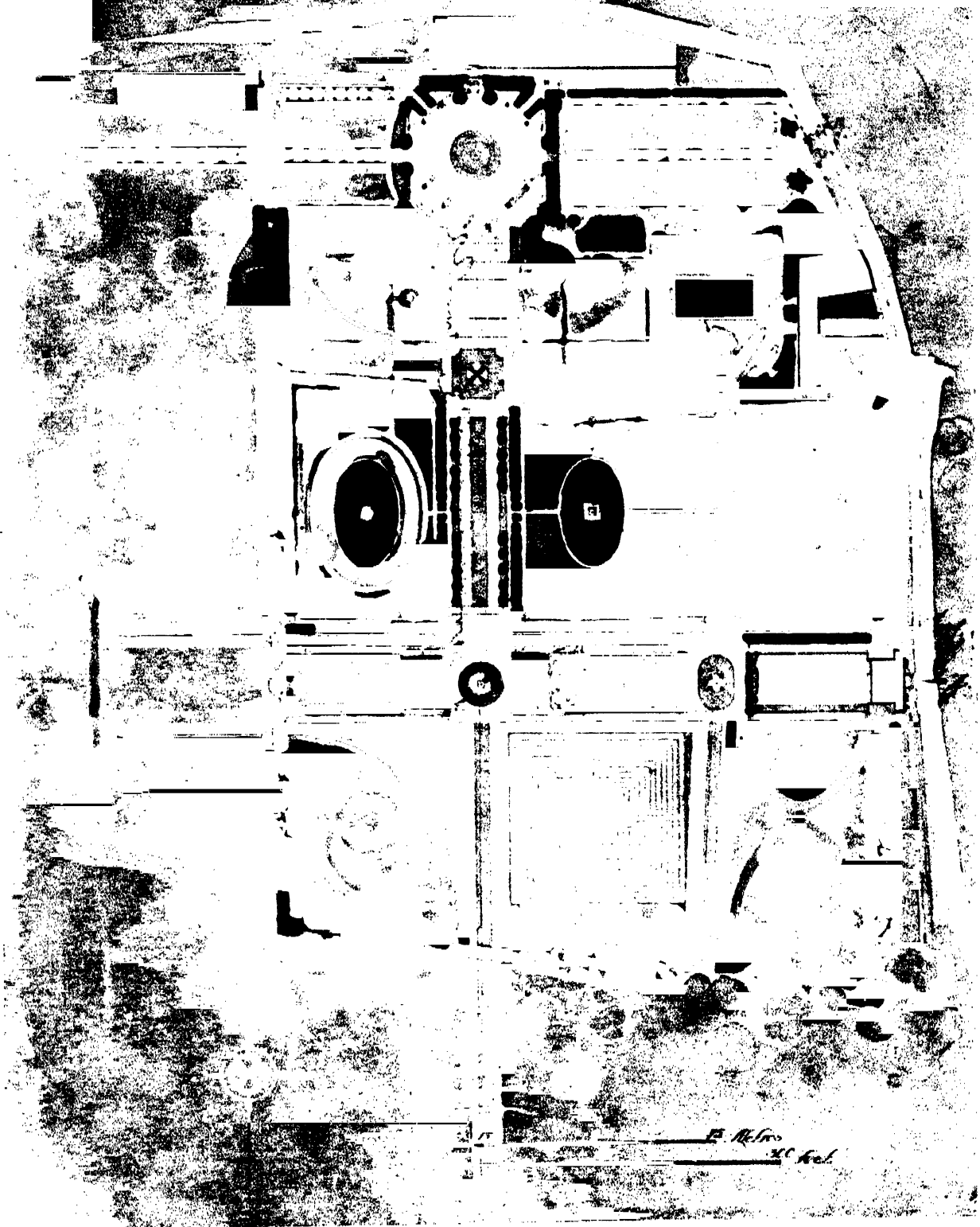


Villa Lante, Bagnaia (By Vignola.)

A delicately proportioned pattern, where there are no conflicting side interests to be subdued (compare page 71). The division of the house into two pavilions emphasises the garden.

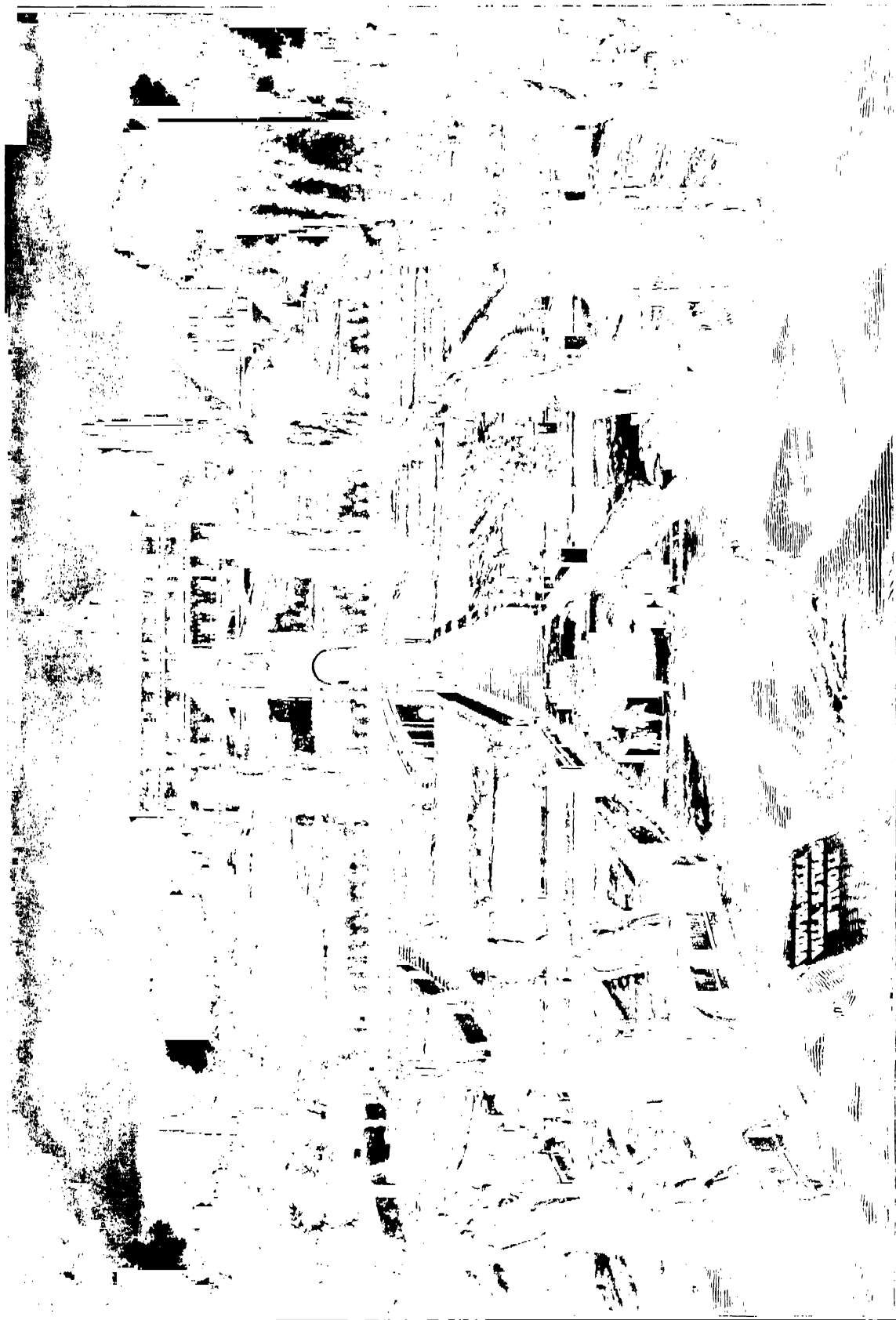
A. DONA

ALZANZIBIO



Villa Dona Dalle Rose, Italy.

A vigorous cross-axial scheme holding together a variety of interests. Note the contrast and proportioning of the axes in themselves.

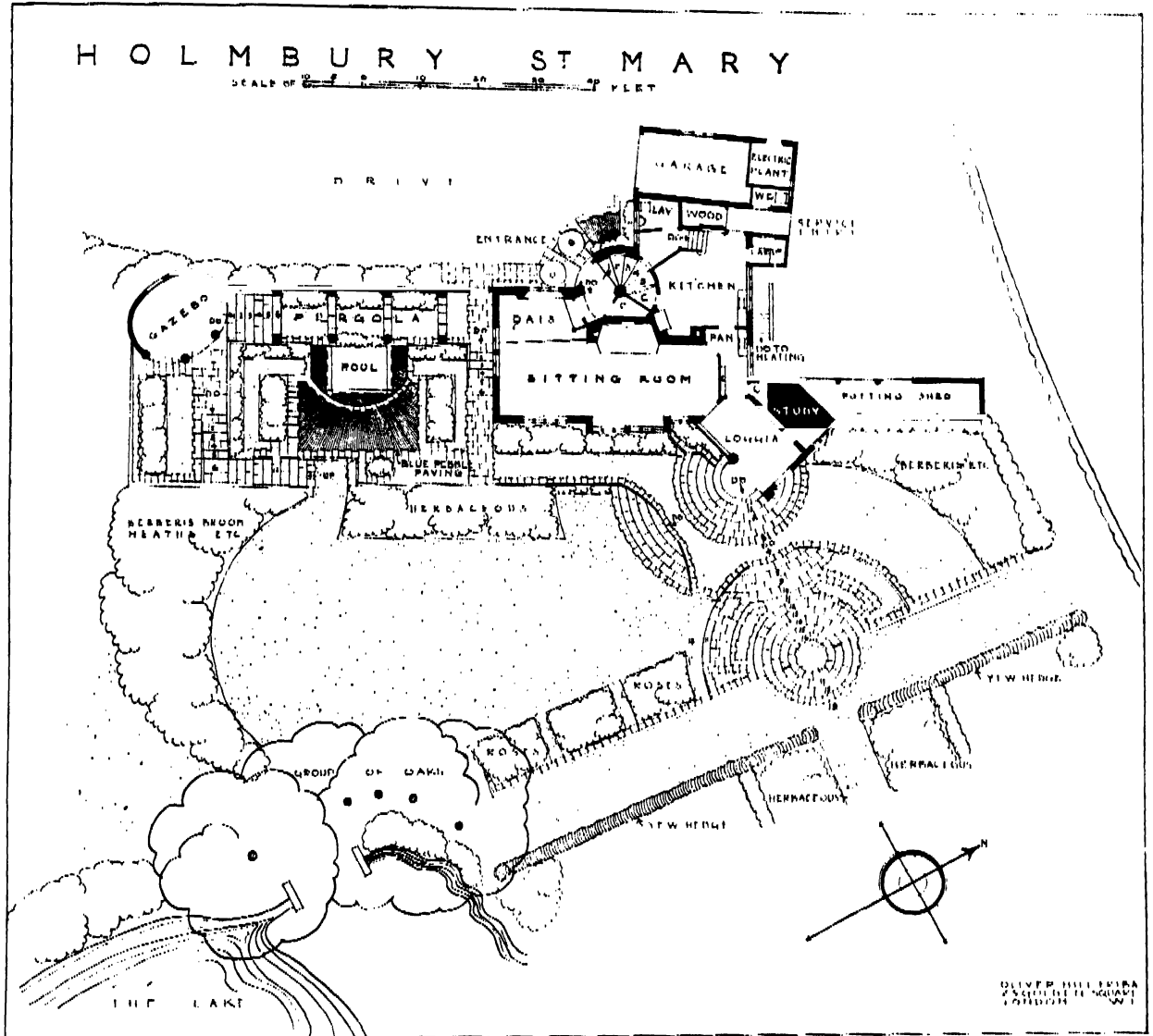


From a print by Piranesi.

Villa d'Este, Tivoli.

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the character of the gardens often depended wholly on curves. In the little eighteenth-century garden of the Arcadian Academy at Rome, the essence of the scheme is a sequence of curves throwing off each other as they proceed upwards. In such a garden a square shape now strikes the important note.



Holmbury St. Mary. (By Oliver Hill, F.R.I.B.A.)

Character of the house carried into the garden.

Gardens, too, have a definite theme that needs to be followed out. Owlpen Manor is composed of narrow terraces and steep steps reminiscent of mediæval days, but the garden at Westbury is low and broad and calm, and everything is consistent with the idea of repose.



House at Holmbury St. Mary. (By Oliver Hill, F.R.I.B.A.)

Grouping in perspective. (See also plan, page 73.)



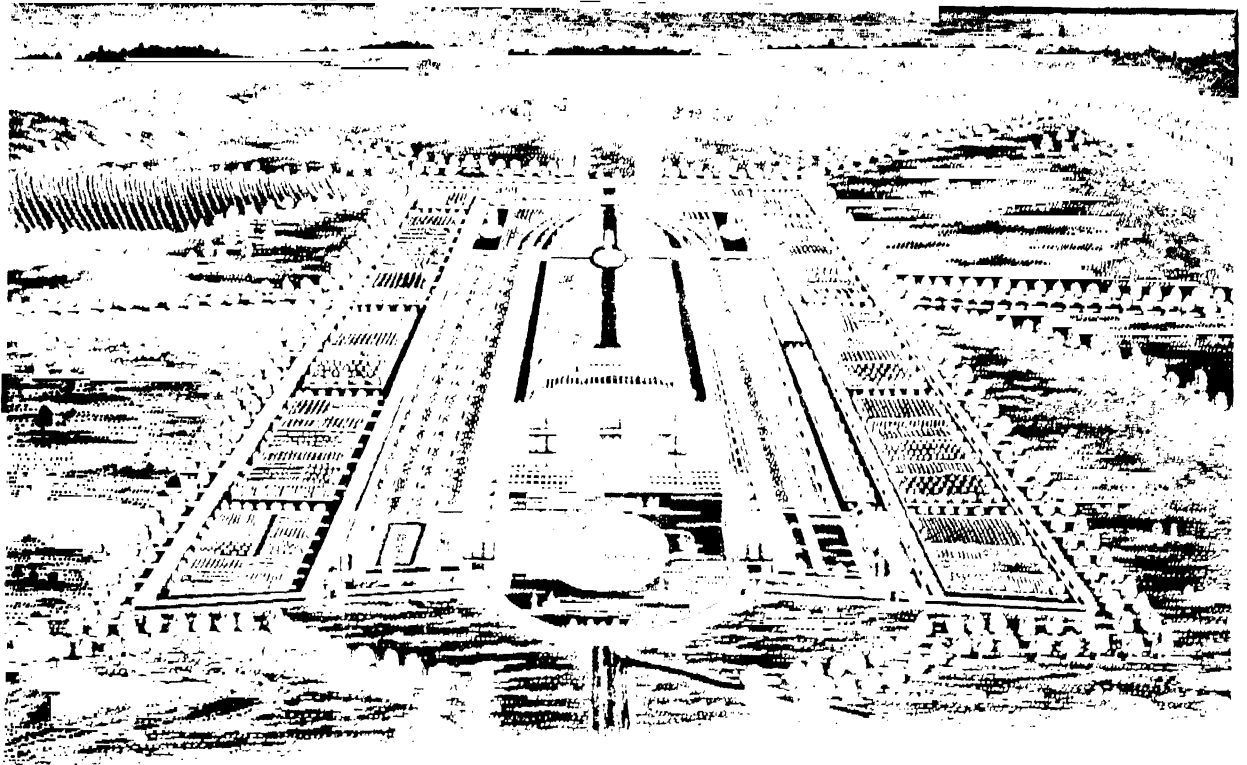
Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Garden of Carl Milles, near Stockholm.

A dominant floor pattern holding together a variety of architecture.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

In itself the elements of a garden could be satisfactorily composed in unlimited different ways, but in reality first the convenience and then the country round narrow the range of composition considerably. Even so, a single garden may be open to many arrangements, from which it is difficult to choose the best. Apart from its significance, the house by its bulk and interest is often the most



RAGLY is the County of WARWICK.

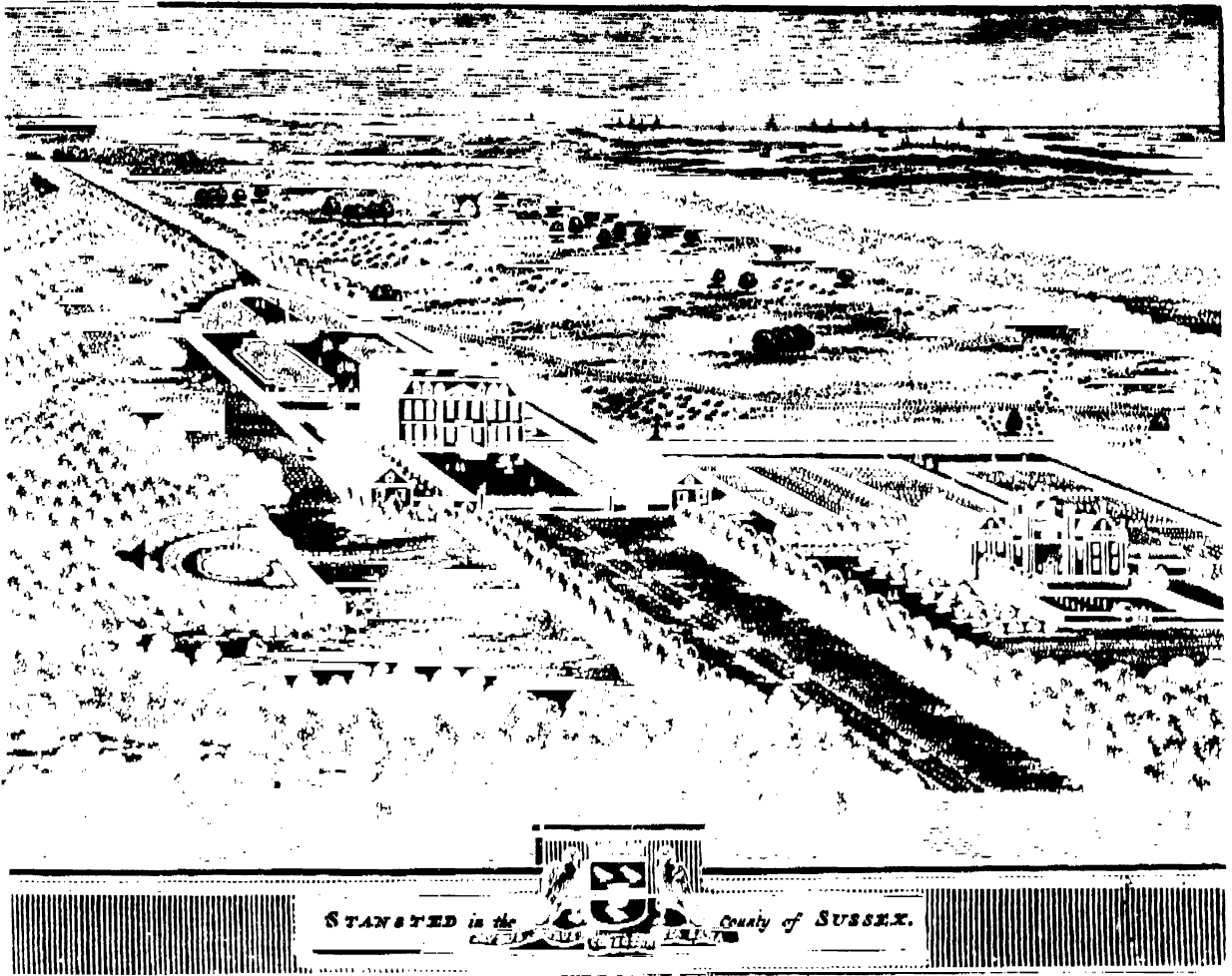
Ragly, Warwickshire.

Perfect balance about the house.

important part of a garden scheme, and round this the garden balances. Ragly in Warwickshire was a perfect example of exact symmetry, where the entrance approach and side wings were well connected through on either side of the house to the main garden scheme which they balanced. 'This was a place so neat and correct that, but for the levels, it might have been arranged away from

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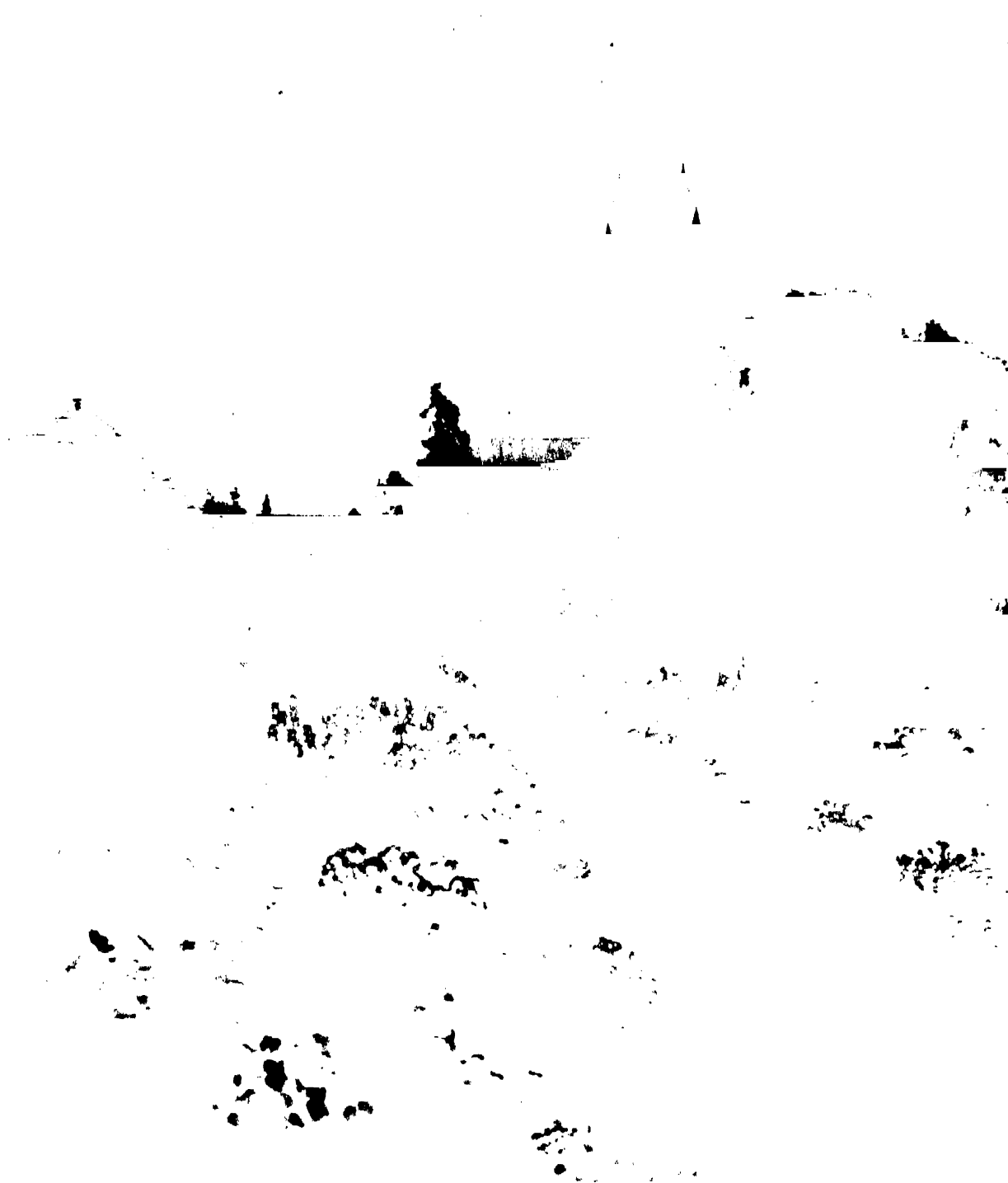
its surroundings. At Stansted, in Sussex, the exact symmetry was eased by the dissimilarity of the church and semicircular garden, and though the parts seem isolated, there is little that could be added or taken away. On the other hand, the garden may have a will of its own, and where it has been boldly flung away from the façade, itself a great open-air room, the scheme is not that of a house



Stansted, Sussex.

Partial asymmetry.

standing in its own grounds, but that of a house together with its grounds. They balance about a part that brings them into composition. Whether it is the curved ramps of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli, or the fountain of Latona at Versailles, there is often some part emphasised that knits the two together. Chantilly (page 127) is a masterpiece of planning. The centre of interest is the statue



Salisbury: Garden in the Close.

A composition of garden and cathedral, where unity in scale is gained by perspective.

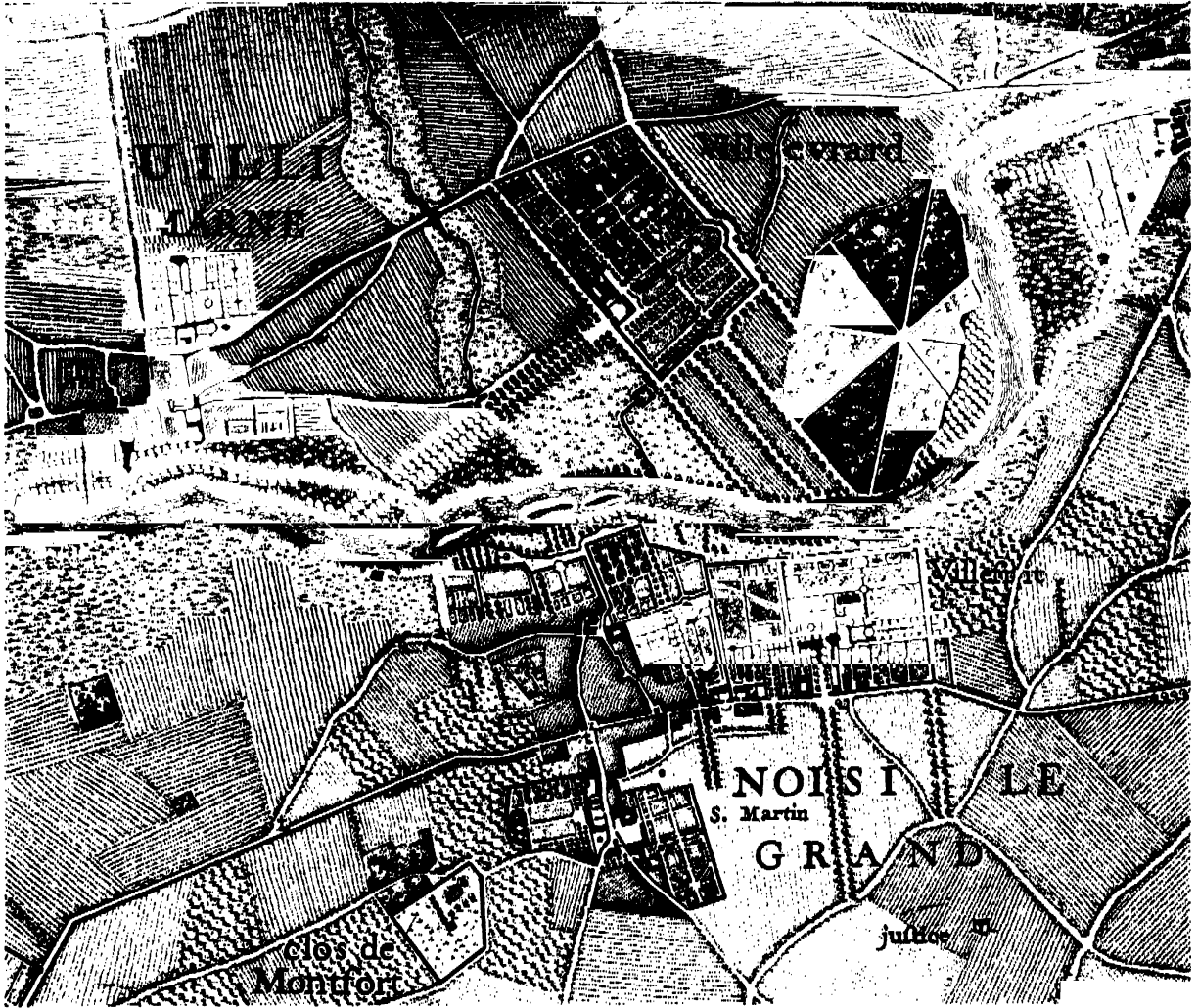


Above : House at Ampthill. Relation of garden to village street.

Below : Hampstead Garden Suburb. Communal garden scheme connecting across the road.

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in the forecourt, and round this swing château, forest, gardens, and canal, in perpetual balance. Just as the garden is the introduction between man and nature, so in a smaller sense it is at times the point of balance of a composition that links the house and the view, the completion of which lies in the imagina-



From a Survey by Delagrève.

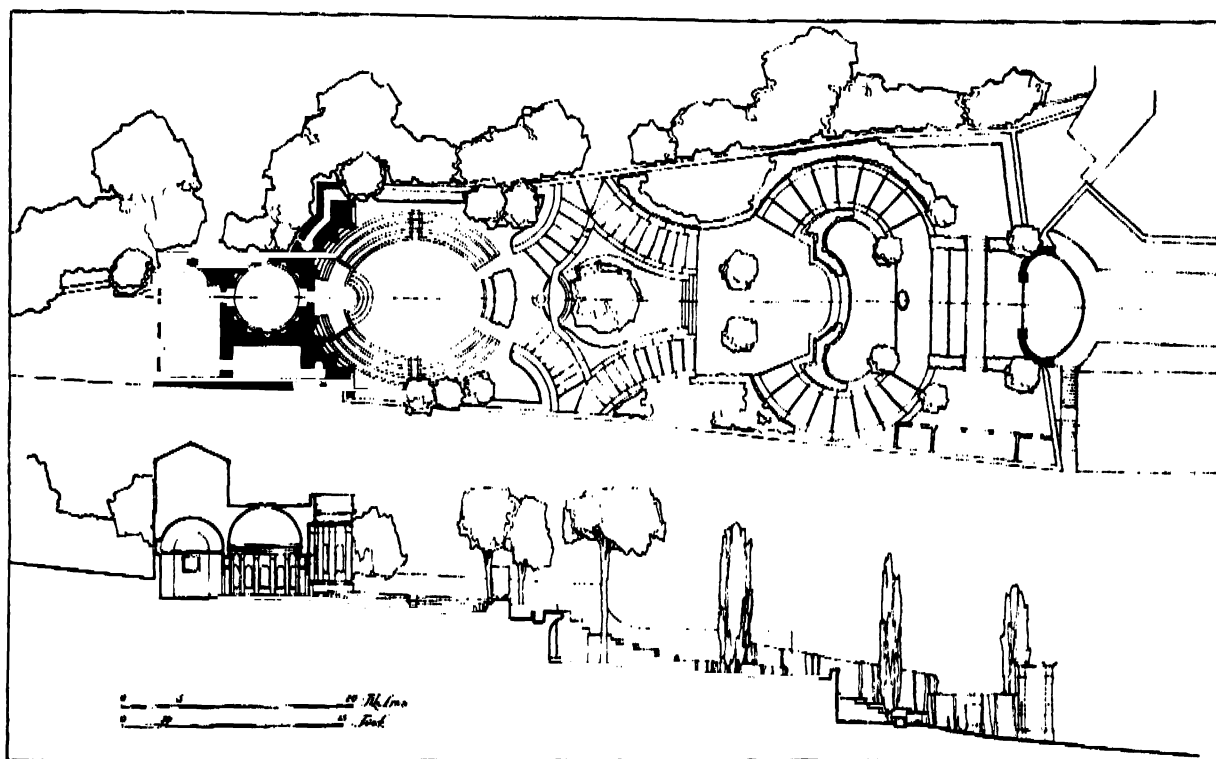
A Typical Village near Paris, in 1740.

Illustrating the technique in planning that applied to every small garden.

tion. One likes to imagine that the fountain at Mondragonc (page 23) is placed here for that purpose. Again the view can be provided for as an integral part of the composition. In such a garden as Hamstead Marshall (page 160), the view must have been a very secondary background. At Little Thakeham the pattern of the garden is actually unbalanced until it is seen that in reality

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the view gives the interest not seen on plan; its presence is here a necessity for comfort and repose. At times the garden becomes so overpowering as to dominate the house. This is a fine conception, a triumph of nature, and the house takes its place in a position arranged for it by the lay-out. The power of the garden at the Villa Lante at Bagnaia is so great that the house has been divided into two pavilions to allow it to flow in between. They are placed at the point of balance, but the climax of the scheme is in the four figures rising



The Arcadian Academy, "Il Paradiso," Rome.

Consistency of curved shapes.

from the square water-garden. While the garden may be so overpowering, at times it dwindles away, as in a town garden, practically to disappear. Here it is so slight as hardly to affect the stability of the house. In its effect upon design, the relation in size between a house and its garden may vary to any extent, provided that the emphasis of either in the final scheme is no more than its importance will admit. The main lines of a composition laid out axially are usually a question of adjustment along the lines of balance. In a scheme where

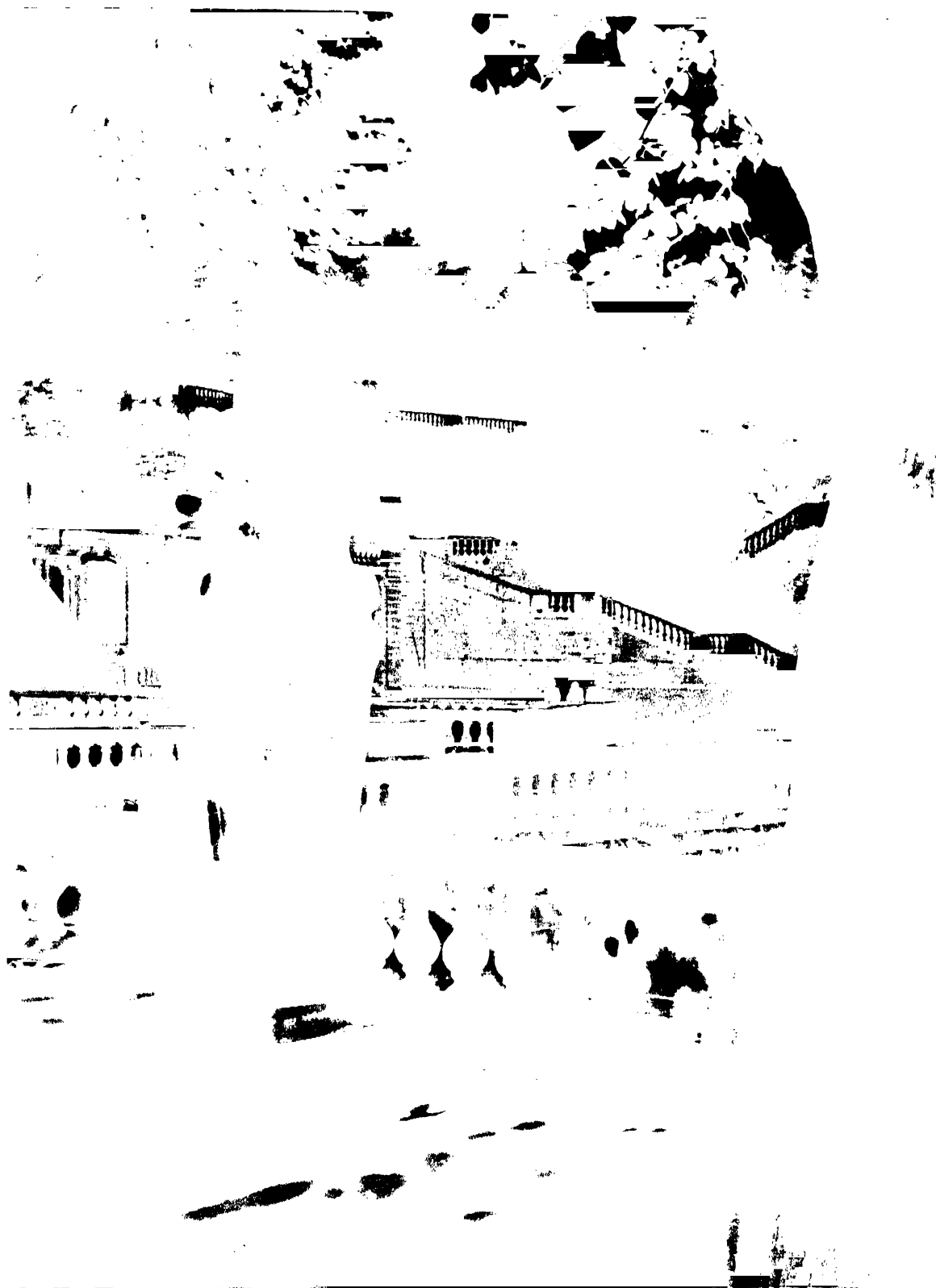


Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

*Above : The Hudson Memorial, Hyde Park. (By Adams, Holden, and Pearson:
Panel by Jacob Epstein.)*

Below : Figure before the Stockholm Town Hall.

Relation of sculpture to architecture by attitude and treatment.

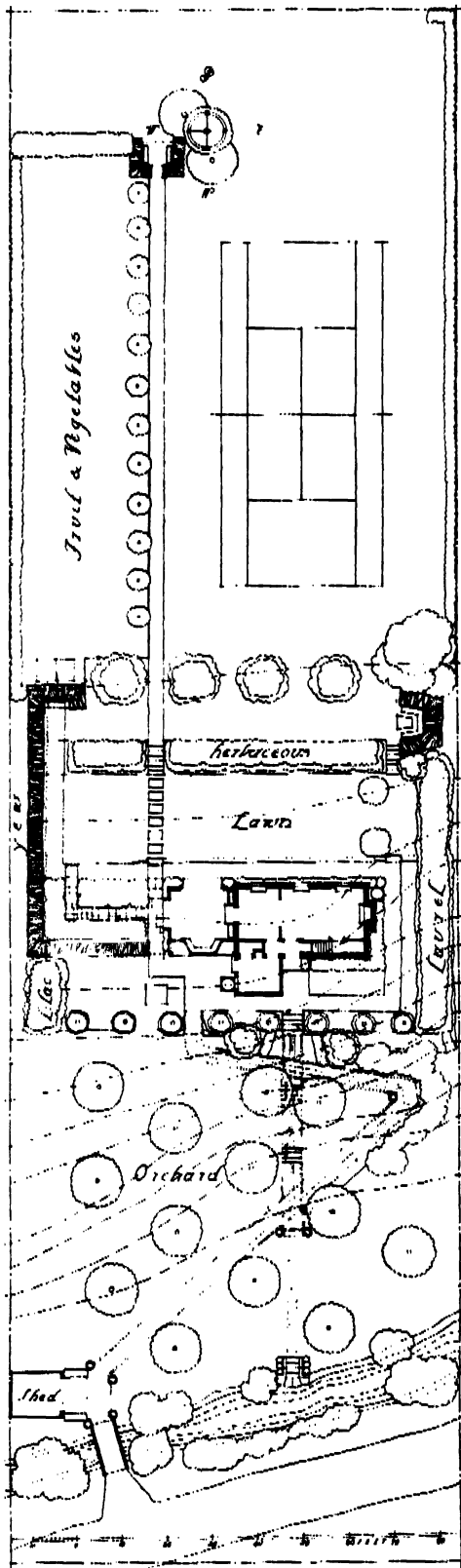


Photo, F. R. Verbury.

Nîmes: The Public Garden.

Convention in sculpture.

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Cottage at Thornton-in-Cleveland, Yorkshire.

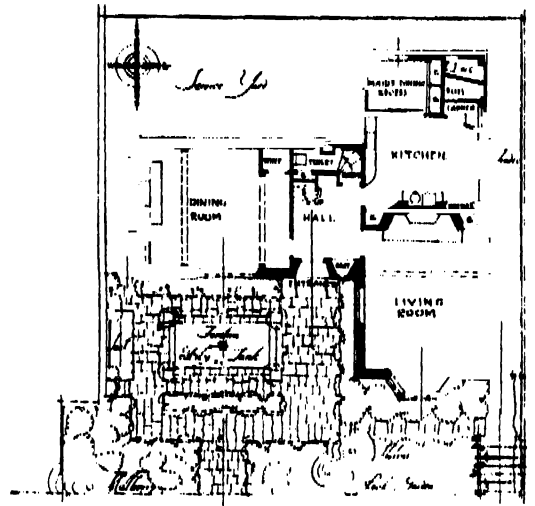
A scheme suggested by contours and an exposed situation.

there is no apparent axis, the spaces of the garden are arranged in the same way as in a picture, linking themselves rhythmically round the point of balance. The gables that chase each other round a mediæval house suggest a garden that follows their fancy. At Marshcourt, where the house is built on asymmetrical grouping, the parts of the garden reflect its balanced character, arranging themselves round the house, and held together by slender lines of circulation. A garden laid out symmetrically from an asymmetrical house may be incongruous unless it is flung sufficiently far away and there is a suggestion in between of a connection. However small the subject, these less sophisticated compositions suggest endless variety of arrangement, drawing upon the plan of the house itself for their inspiration. There is the simple little scheme at Wimbledon, or the more rhythmic one at Holmbury St. Mary; those that have more elements and perhaps use a loggia to connect house and garden; or the pattern in a confined town garden.

From the flat pattern of the garden, there is the consideration of the grouping and massing of its elements. A garden has as much solidity as building, and one that is purely pattern is like a house that is purely façade. It lacks substance, and becomes artificial. In a level country where the masses are planted on the

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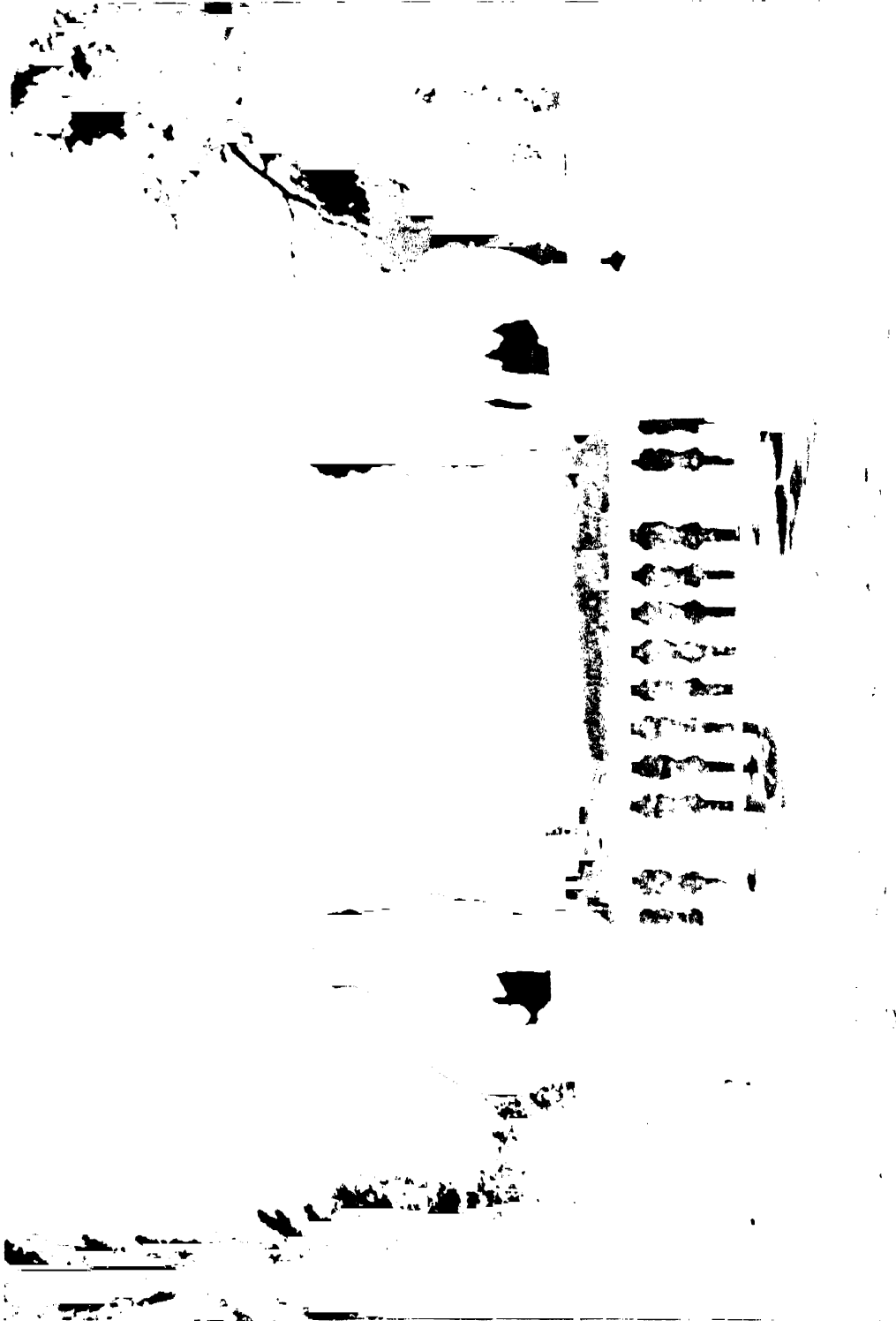
ground, they have to be made and are disposed at will. Clipped trees and hedges take their places as solids, as in a smaller way do free-growing trees and bushes. Where the country is uneven and the garden is built in terraces, there is the chance of handling vast masses in a way inconceivable in any other branch of art. On Isola Bella the mass of the house balances the great rock-hewn terraces at the further extremity of the island. For the moment the terraces at the Villa d'Este at Tivoli piling up to the house strike the beholder dumb with wonder. Perhaps more than anyone else Frank Lloyd Wright in America has grasped the colossal latent power that lies behind the subject, using it in the smallest composition. If this grouping and massing bears out the flat pattern, and the pattern is itself interesting and unified, the feeling that results from walking about the garden will be indirectly the same. There is a sense of completeness in the transition of passing through the various spaces, whether between the masses or upon them. Each new space may in itself be interesting, or surprising, or exhilarating, but it is never out of place. It is, on the contrary, the note that has to be struck to complete the unity of the whole. Moreover, in perspective these designs fall naturally in good compositions. Definitely arranged viewpoints are liable to sacrifice everything to one end, and from the famous view in the circle of cypresses at the Villa d'Este to that of such a small group as the one at Holmbury St. Mary, fine effects have nearly always come first from a well-balanced plan. It is generally accepted that the grandest conceptions of the past were *considered* in perspective, but *designed* in plan or elevation. Gardens sometimes spread beyond their sphere, and attach themselves not only to external natural objects, but to buildings as well. Often in an English garden when the village clusters round the church, the tower or steeple has become part of the scheme. At Westbury



House at Wimbledon.

(By P. D. Hepworth, F.R.I.B.A.)

Close association in character between
house and garden.



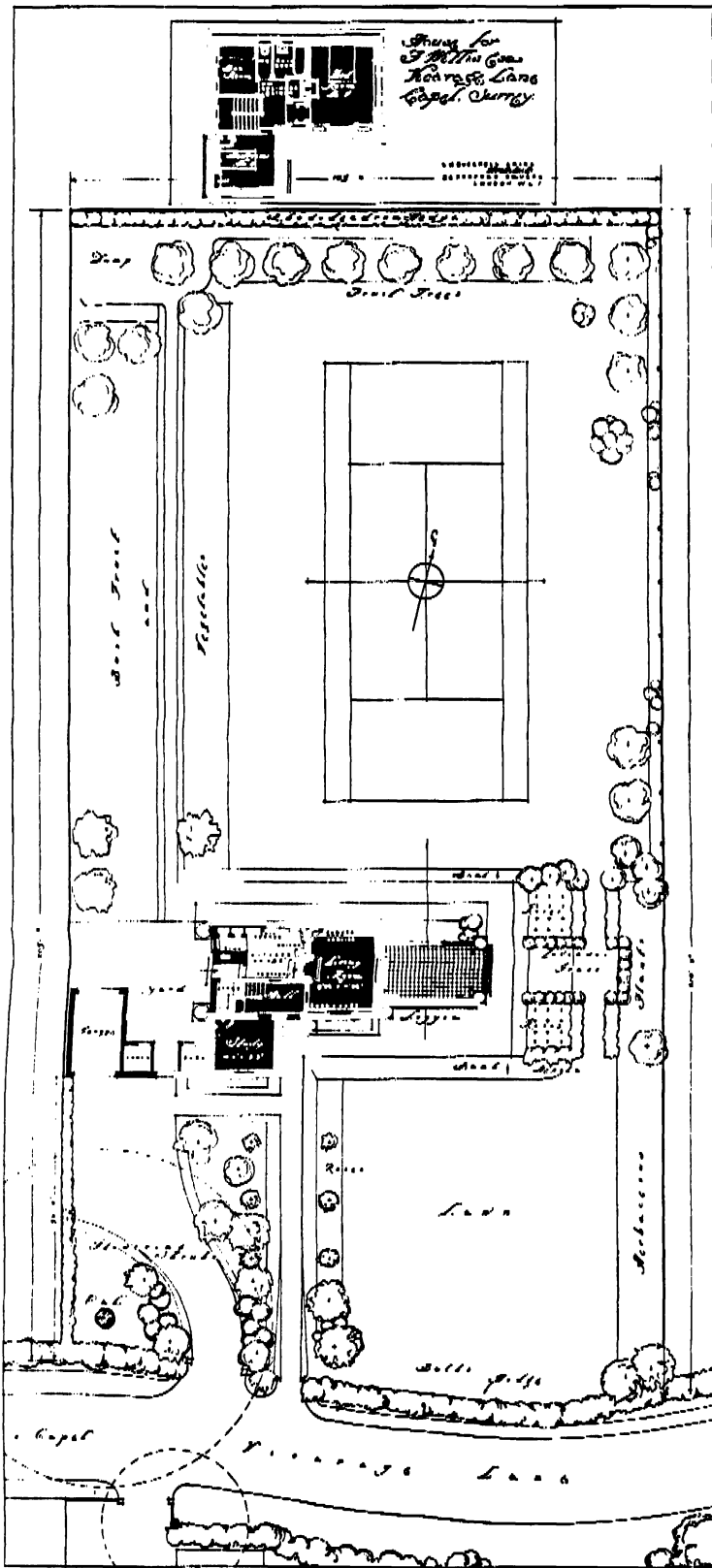
Villa Bombicci, near Florence.

Conventional relation of sculpture to architectural setting by attitude.

Ven House, Somerset.

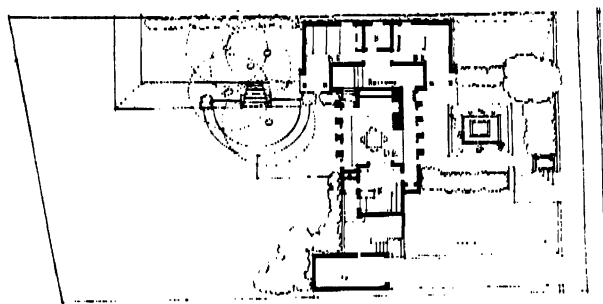
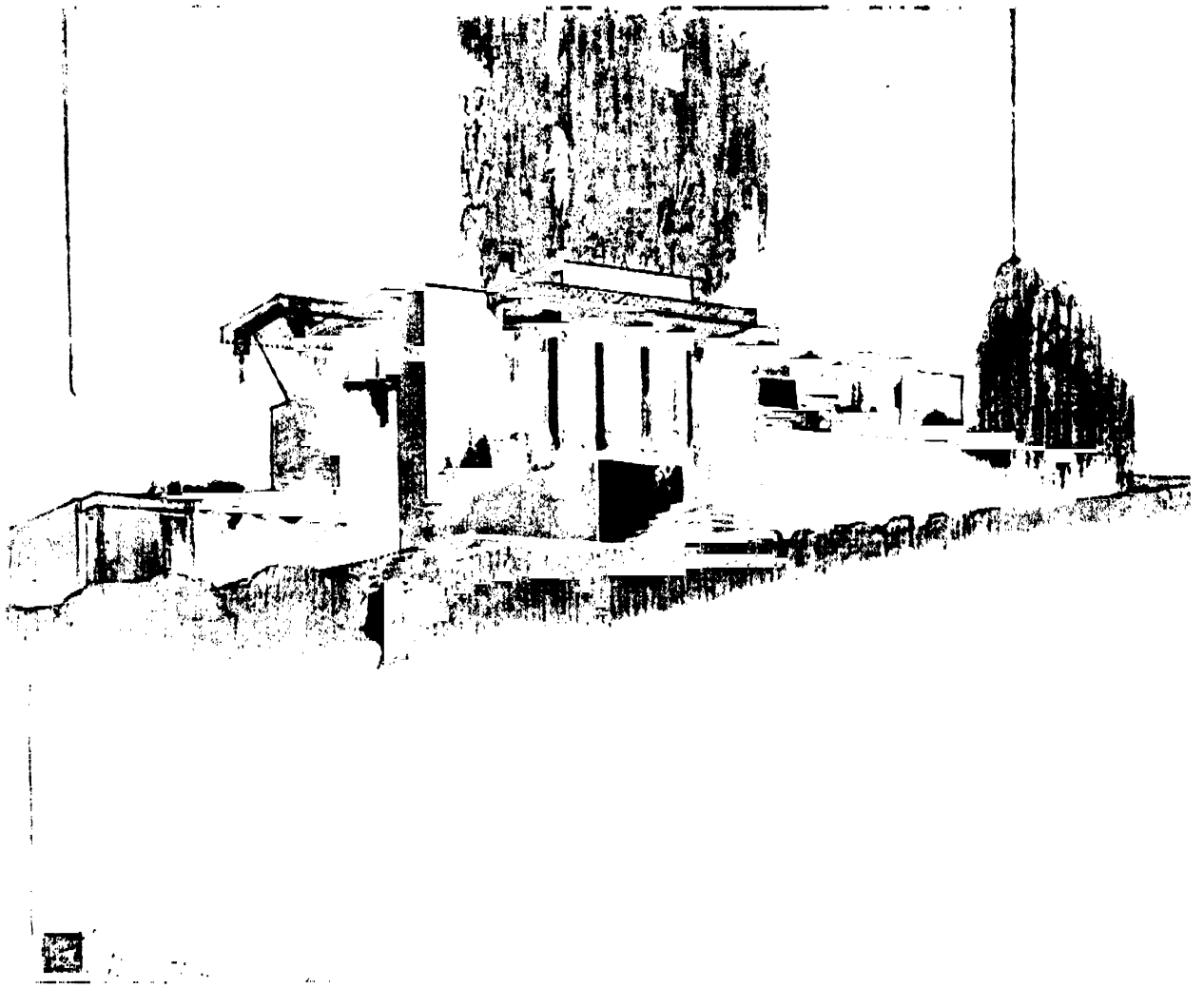
Topiary work expressing the character of English design.





House at Capel, Surrey. (By L. H. Bucknell, A.R.I.B.A.)
Composition suggested by necessities.

(page 186), the curious free-standing spire once finished the cross axis of the garden, and was then a foil to the long, low lines. The noblest example comes from the herbaceous walk at Salisbury, where a finer foreground to the Cathedral could scarcely be imagined. When a little garden like the one in Ampthill has to be absorbed by the town, it needs all the force of its corner piers to assert any independence within. The little communal garden at Hampstead Garden Suburb links across the road. These are intimate relationships, but often one finds a great garden embracing a very much wider area: the Villa Lante and the town of Bagnaia, the Farnese and the Farnesina palaces connected across the Tiber, Le Nôtre's scheme for the Champs Elysée, and in England, where such ideas have been less developed than abroad, perhaps Hampton Court and Bushey Park.



House in America. (By Frank Lloyd Wright.)
A study in form.



Above : House at Moreton Valence, Gloucestershire.

Below : Compton Wynyates.

Relation of topiary to architecture.

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The block form, with the parts waiting to be emphasised by detail, is the basis of a garden design. The decoration of this has to be consistent, for the quality of a small detail may make or mar a design. Close to, the eye first grasps detail, and if this earliest introduction to the garden is pleasing, it will proceed to the parts that really matter. The character of a place embraces house and garden, and the two work together so that it is difficult to say where the one leaves off and the other begins. Design seizes upon the necessary characteristics of both, shakes them together, and stamps itself equally upon every portion of the result; though it is true that often such an apparently small point as a vigorous floor pattern can draw together many diverging parts. Perhaps the strongest thread that links the elements together is scale. Scale, related as it is to humanity, brings everything to a common standard of size, that presented by a man. It is not merely that the details give the proper sense of size to the parts, but all sorts of odd shapes and sizes are thus drawn together. Scale is that to which the eye is accustomed. The height of a balustrade, the size of a window or a door opening, a step, are all more or less fixed by utility. Details are fixed by the capability of material. Stone can be hewn in greater blocks than it is convenient to make a brick, but it cannot be carved to as fine a pitch as wood. A standard that is once accepted is used consistently throughout. Only where the parts are definitely separated, as in the secret garden of an entertaining garden, is it safe to juggle with different scales. The detail reflects the character of the pattern, from the light and graceful treillage that so delightfully expresses the plan of a French garden to the massive simplicity of the yews at Ven House. It is incongruous to have a refined shape on a rough ground, though a graceful form contrasts harmoniously enough with a refined strength of surface. Stateliness mates with delicacy, crude strength with wild fragility. The position of materials suggests their own treatment; a retaining wall may be formed of rugged jointed stonework, because this treatment suggests strength, though we know that a smooth surface would be equally strong. The retaining wall supports a pergola which by contrast is light and free, though not so free as to appear detached. Construction is



The Priory, Orpington.
Harmony of time.

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often the clue to æsthetics, and we realise that the arch is so shaped to span a greater width than the lintel. The quality of the detail harmonises with the character of the garden; a balustrade is more refined than a brick wall and plain parapet. The materials used are also in keeping, and for this reason so refined a material as marble is out of place in an English garden, while it may be at home at Versailles. Bronzes and lead take on a beautiful texture if left to weather. Sculpture may seek to express not only the natural surroundings, but also architecture, and, apart from its texture, its design is something different from the mortal whose form it appears to take for the moment. It stands for an abstract idea, and may therefore assume a shape that expresses this idea rather than exact human form. The figure in the garden of the townhall at Stockholm is clearly a part of the building. When sculpture is actually carved on the building, it is still more closely related to the architecture. The first thing that matters in Epstein's panel on the monument to Hudson in Hyde Park is the architectural pattern of light and shade, which, foiled by its plain ground, attracts the eye immediately. The rhythm of shadows suggests the movement of wings, and design is unaffected by the sentiment of the subject. The simplification of form undoubtedly draws the subject to its architectural setting, but need not necessarily be emphasised to do this. A herm grows out of his base unconcernedly. In the lions that gaze out and frame the view from the Villa Collazzi, near Florence, attributed to Michaelangelo, the silhouette and form are related to their position mainly by their conventional attitude. Convention suggests topiary work, but only if it is as much related to the scheme as in the particular view of Compton Wynyates, or the more severe house at Morcton Valence, can it become essential. A detail preserves its freshness and spontaneity if it is designed for its place, for the finest detail becomes dead if it is in the wrong setting. A detail such as a moulding is again generally the outcome of purpose. The nosing to a garden step is for comfort, and its shape for strength. The line of shadow gives a refinement that a brick-on-edge step would lack. The overhang of a balustrade rail is given to throw off water, but its value lies in the refining shape that follows. The degree of refinement naturally varies. If the balustrade were

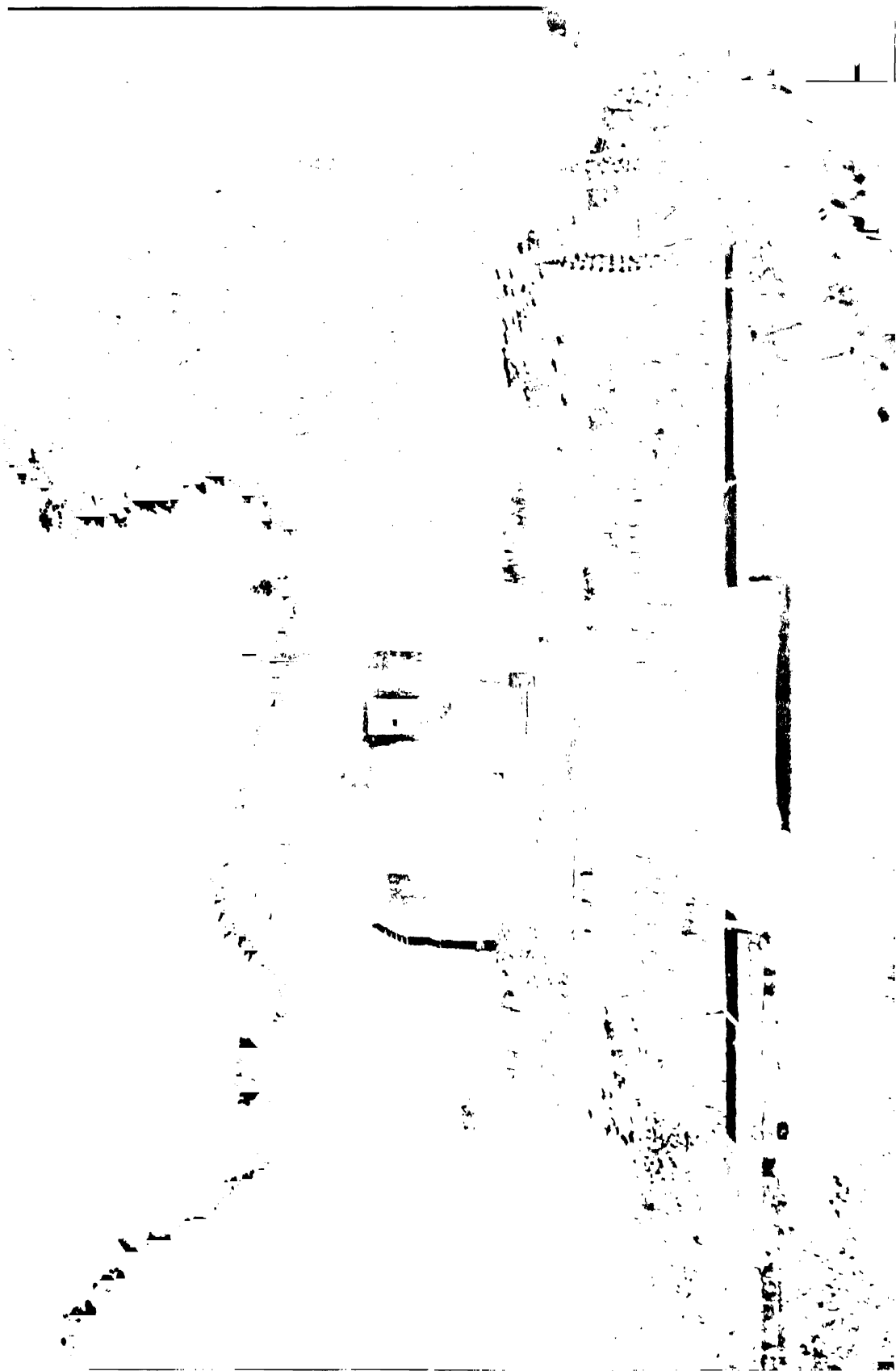


The Priory, Orpington.
Profusion of flowers in a firm setting.



Foots Cray Place.

Fruit garden with design of espaliers.



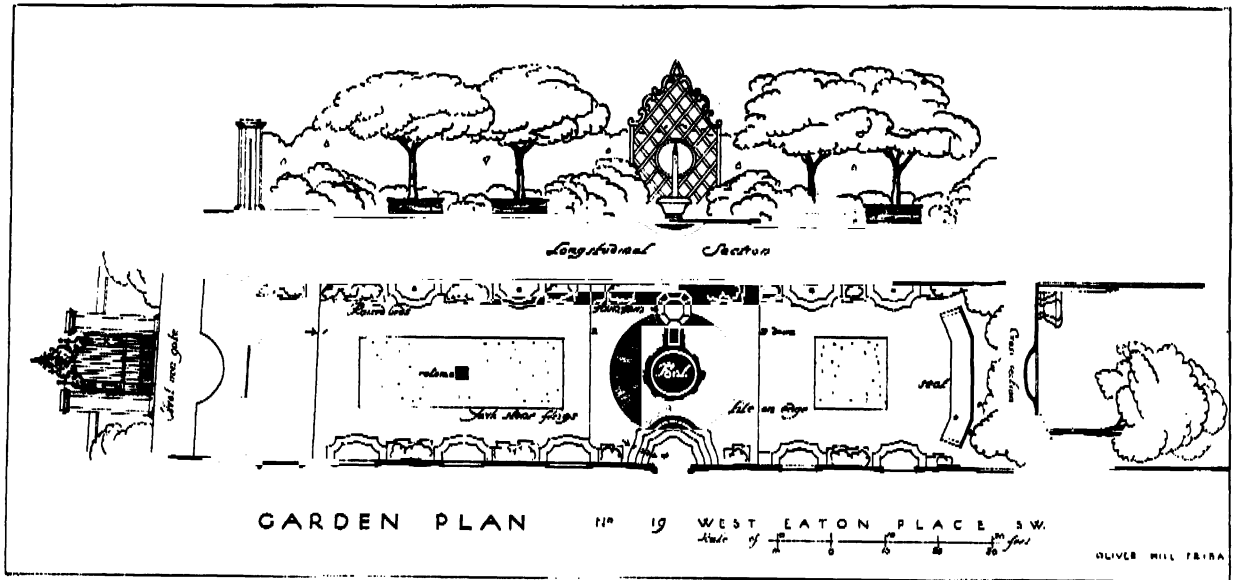
The Priory, Orpington. (By C. E. Hughes.)
Flowers in steady lines of architecture.



Great Maytham, Kent.

Flowers connected to architectural surroundings. (See also page 32.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN



19, West Eaton Place, S.W. (By Oliver Hill, F.R.I.B.A.)

Treatment of a confined site.

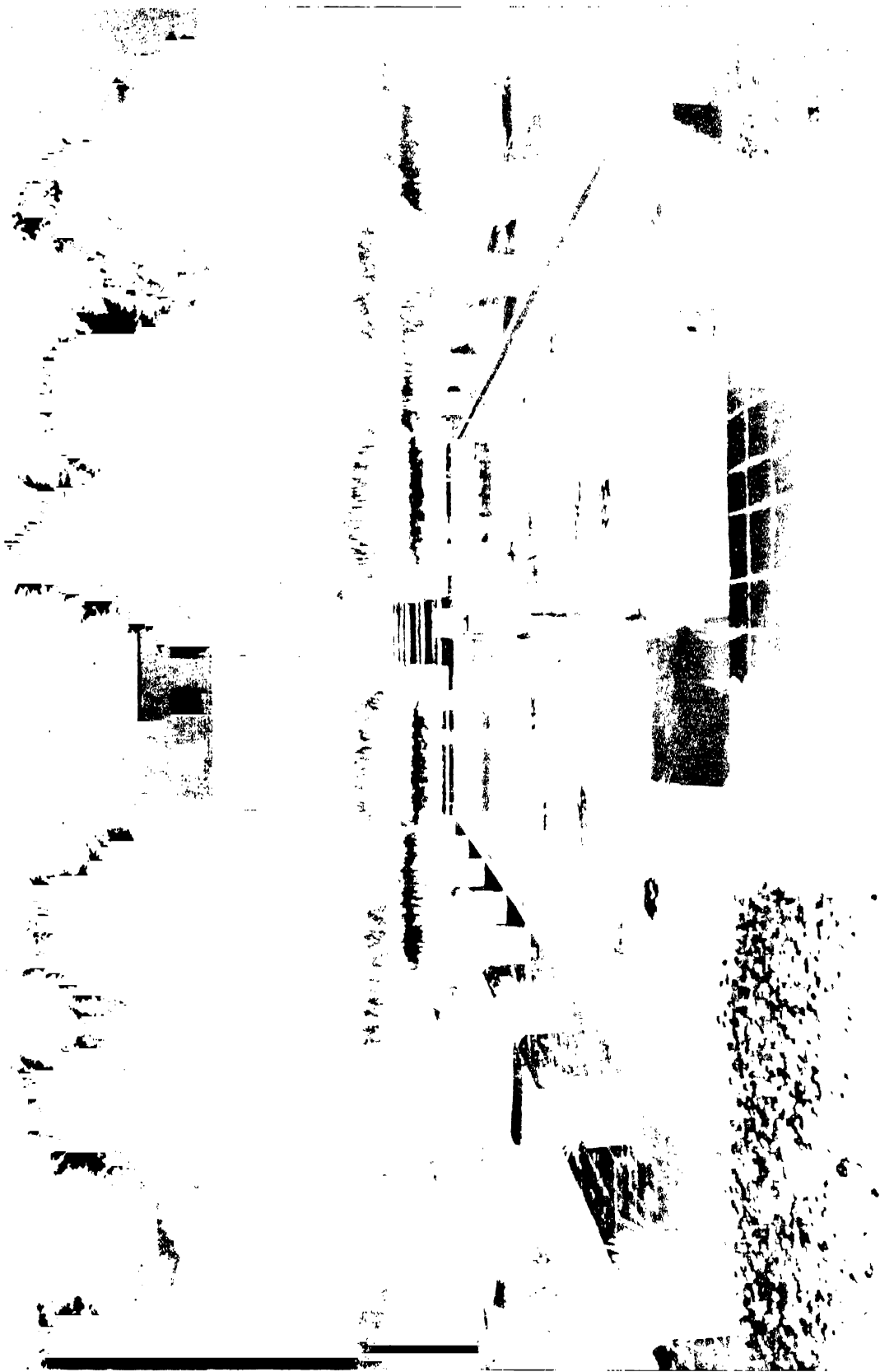
coarse enough not to mind the weather, it follows that the position would also be coarse, and the lack of refinement justified. The principles of design are pattern. The light and shadow of a moulding is in reality an offspring of the pattern of the garden. A careful adjustment of detail will always blend together architecture of marked periods, though the varying types that go to make such a view as the approach vista at the Priory, Orpington, are necessarily assisted by time.

Horticulture has the same relation to the garden as any material. Flowers are lovely things that enhance the garden, rather than make it. Like everything else, they take the places for which they have been designed. They are marshalled into ranks to give a mass of colour, and planted single where the intimacy allows for an appreciation of their perfect form. Specimens are things of special interest rather than beauty; and because the garden is primarily not a museum, they, too, conform to the general plan, rubbing alongside their neighbours on their æsthetic merits only. The herbaceous border is where all flowers meet, and its broken patchwork quilt effect covers a very much larger area in the scheme than would be possible if it were composed of one type. At Orpington there are

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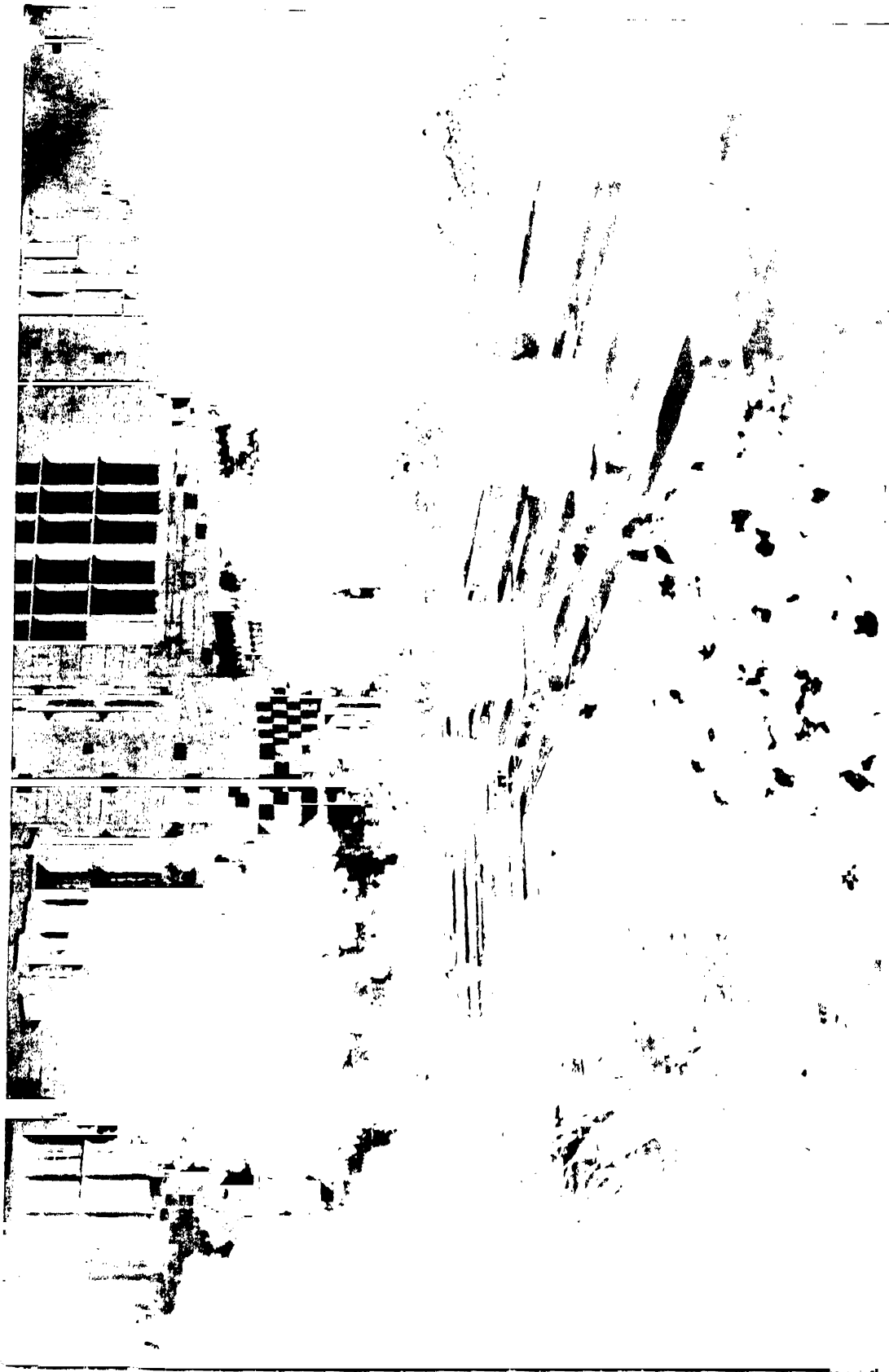
two such borders rising one above the other to a high wall. Within their firm lines the flowers are for ever tumbling over one another in delicious profusion. Flowers at all times are delicate and their immediate setting is important in connecting them up with their more robust surroundings. The border at Great Maytham is admirably related to the broad lawn and formal architecture of the house. When daffodils grow in clusters at the foot of trees, they are informal and closely akin to nature. Gather them up and place them in a formal bed and it is contrast of firm lines and colour that returns them their value. A Dutch garden, of the type in Kensington Gardens, is a delightful and considered setting for flowers; the simple rectangle of terraces rises in tiers from the water's edge and is backed by the calm dark surround of the pleached alley. Here varying flowers are planted in masses that form a pattern of colour when seen as a whole, but where each flower can also be visited by the paths that lead round. In contrast to this, the little enclosed formal garden at Marshcourt is over-architectural for flowers, but scores because it is interesting all the year round. Different flowers like different positions; the more robust prefer positions of importance, and the more delicate have to be treated with care. Such small, delicate-scented flowers as pinks are happy in beds raised from the walk, inviting by their scent. A fruit garden suggests its own interesting ways of arrangement. So are the minute items of the pattern drawn together to conform to their unit and at the same time to be seen at their best.

The garden is a place at peace. Not only is it at peace with the house and its surroundings, but it is at peace within itself. There is the harmony of an all-presiding genius. Parts are liable to stray and be lost; others may meet and disagree; others are too much in agreement to the exclusion of everyone else. Then comes this spirit of the garden, which has to do with the garden itself, welding them all into a powerful whole. Through all the works of art the world has produced, design runs evenly, appearing again and again in different forms, in literature, music, or the plastic arts. Its principles never alter. Expressing the chequered pattern of our lives, it is itself pattern, whether read, heard, or seen, and the greatest and most intricate work of art is in reality built upon this simple



Kensington Gardens.

An enclosed setting for flowers.

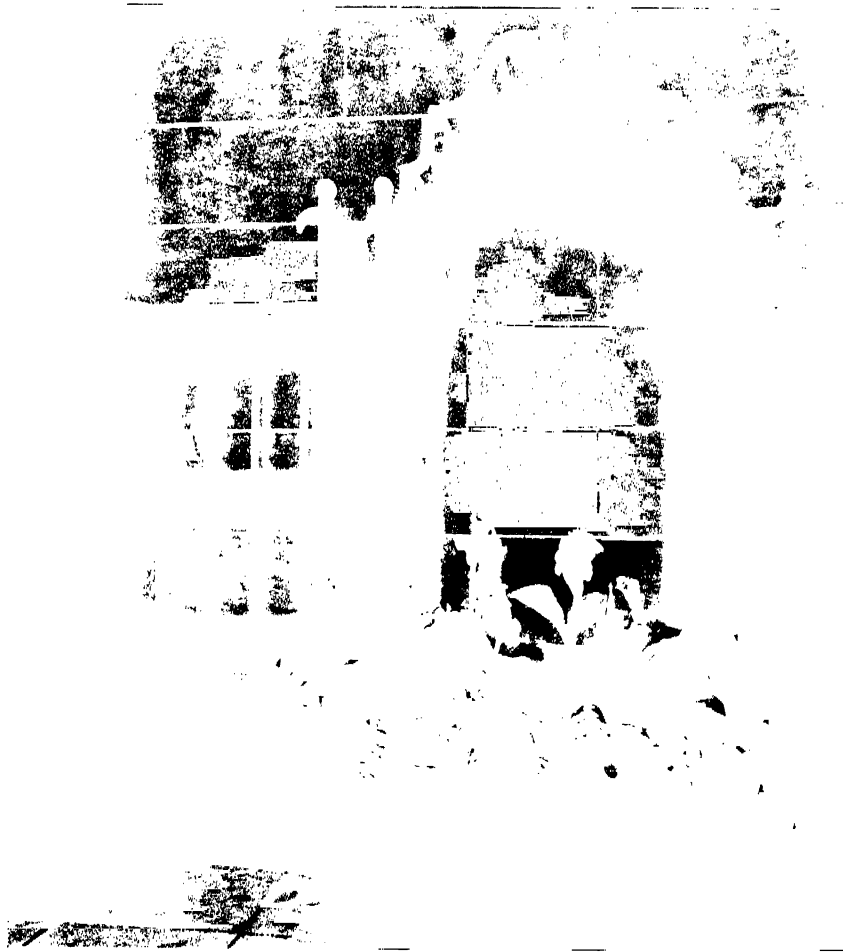


Marshcourt, Hampshire. (By Sir Edwin Lutyens.)

An enclosed garden of a permanent character.

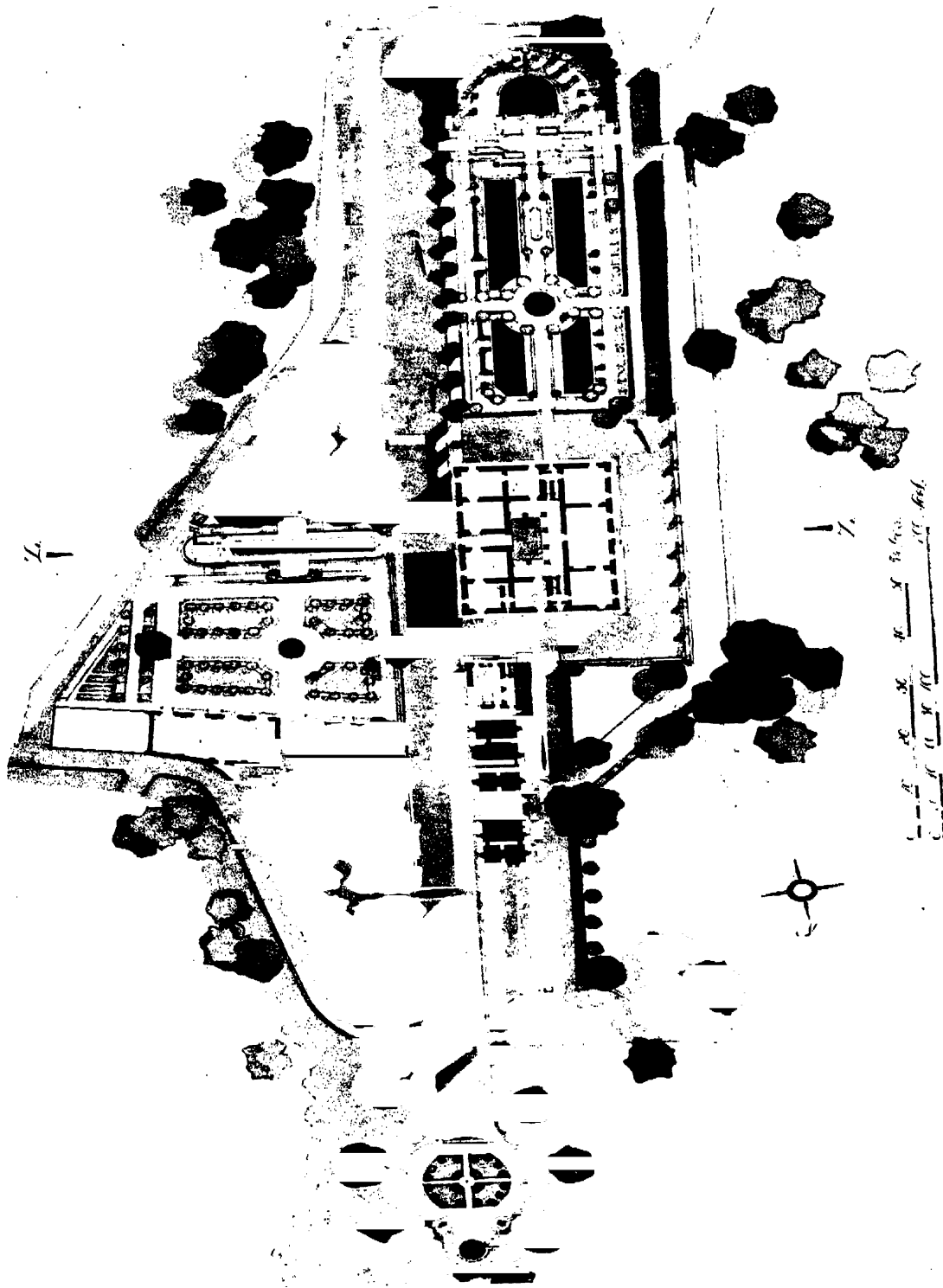
GARDENS AND DESIGN

thing. Pattern springs from rhythm, playing variations upon the beats of the pulse and weaving many elements into one. It assumes a definite character. That strange hypnotism over the senses comes when the whole is finely proportioned, and proportion is as elusive as it is wonderful. A work may be sound and substantial in principle; take away its proportion, and away goes the life. The design now adopts the form for which it is conceived, and it becomes an expression of reason.

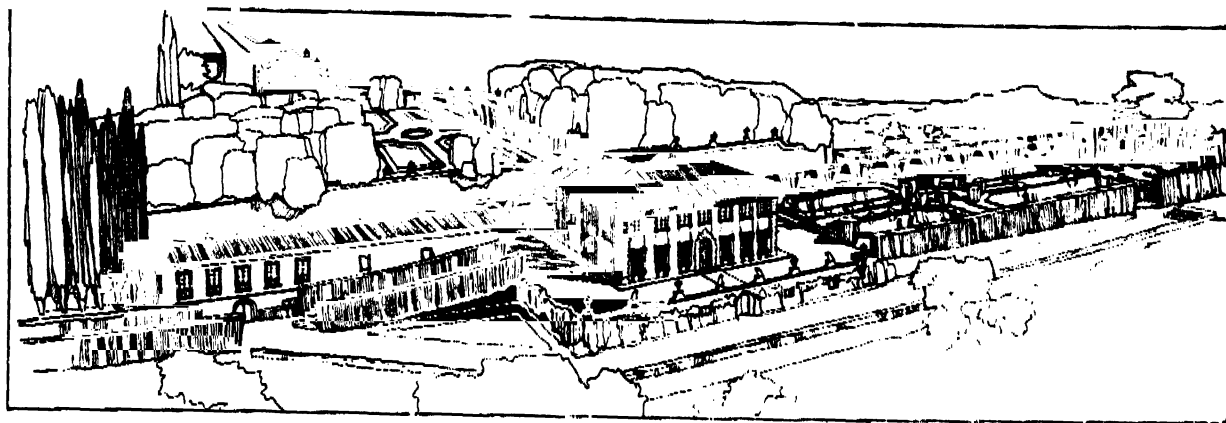


29, Palace Street, S.W. 1. (By L. H. Bucknell and R. Ellis.)

PART 2



Villa Gamberaia: Plan.



Villa Gamberaia.

I

VILLA GAMBERAIA

THE Italian Renaissance marks the entrance of the modern world. Perhaps for the first time the delicate shades of a variety of minds were understood. In those days individuals stood out in brighter high lights than now, and to Italy one must turn to feel most clearly the charm of personality in a garden. Outwardly Italian gardens are the expression of their own countrymen; in spirit they are almost universal.

In the Middle Ages a man was part of a community. He had no thoughts of himself, for life was but a preparation, and the enjoyment of the present lay in the anticipation of the future. The first to find the individual was Dante, for Dante, though still mediæval in subject, tells of the passions that fill the soul. In art, a little later, Giotto breathed life into Madonnas that had been beautiful symbols of the unattainable. The spirit spread over Italy, and in a short time man came universally into his own. The times were well fitted to the furthering of individuality, for Italy was divided into small states, controlled either by republics or petty despots. Under them individualism was encouraged to flourish for good or bad. The printing-press enabled people to evade the preaching of the Church, which had for long forbidden free thought. In natural science, exploration, and discovery, individuals were probing everywhere. Social intercourse became an art, the whole mode of living taking on a higher status; the streets of Florence were paved when those of London and

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Paris were squalid and unhealthy. In every branch of life this vitality occurred, culminating in the consideration of the individual by himself.

The accomplishments of Michaelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci are well known, but probably the most versatile of all men was the Florentine, Leo Battista Alberti. As an athlete he was unrivalled in Florence. He practised architecture, composed music, studied law, physics and mathematics, and learnt every sort of craft. He was an author of exceptional range, his works including Latin prose and elegies, various moral and philosophical works, speeches and poems, and writings on art that are standard. "But the deepest spring of his nature has yet to be spoken—the sympathetic intensity with which he entered into the whole life around him."* While men were perfecting themselves, some were writing either their own biography or that of others. Vasari's Lives are intimately associated with the personalities they describe. Cellini, setting down his own strange spirit, tells frankly of a mighty personality curiously mixed with good and evil. Following the study of mankind, the position to which he was now raised is contained in a speech by Pico della Mirandola on the dignity of man. "I have set thee," says the Creator to Adam, "in the midst of the world, that thou mayest the more easily behold and see all that is therein. I created thee a being neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal only, that thou mayest be free to shape and overcome thyself. . . . To thee alone is given a growth and a development depending on thine own free will. Thou bearest in thee the germs of a universal life."

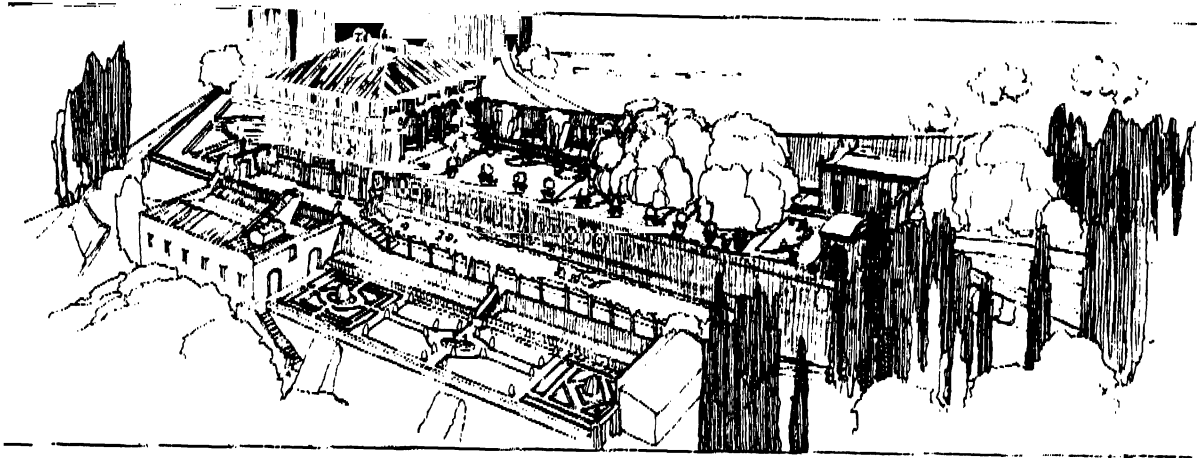
Together with the discovery of man, came the discovery of nature. The beauty of nature as an influence for good was unappreciated in mediæval days. Literature is a reflection of thought, and in that of the Middle Ages there seems to be little description of natural scenery. The pageantry of Crusades is described, but not the country through which the Crusaders passed. People who communed with nature even ran the risk of being burnt. The Italians fully understood and felt the glory of a distant view, and it imprinted itself vividly upon their sensitive souls. While Dante saw nature dimly, Petrarch

* Burckhardt, "The Renaissance in Italy."

VILLA GAMBERAIA

sang of it untrammelled; it is said that during his stay among the woods at Reggio, the sudden sight of an impressive landscape affected him so deeply he resumed a poem he had long set aside. Alberti himself felt the power of nature. ". . . at the sight of noble trees and waving cornfields, he shed tears . . . and more than once when he was ill, the sight of a beautiful landscape cured him."* It was love of nature and distant views that called the Florentines from town, prepared even to face the uncertain safety of the country in order to enjoy it to the utmost.

It followed that this highly developed and sensitive people soon turned their attention to the strengthening and refreshing of the mind. Of all the arts at



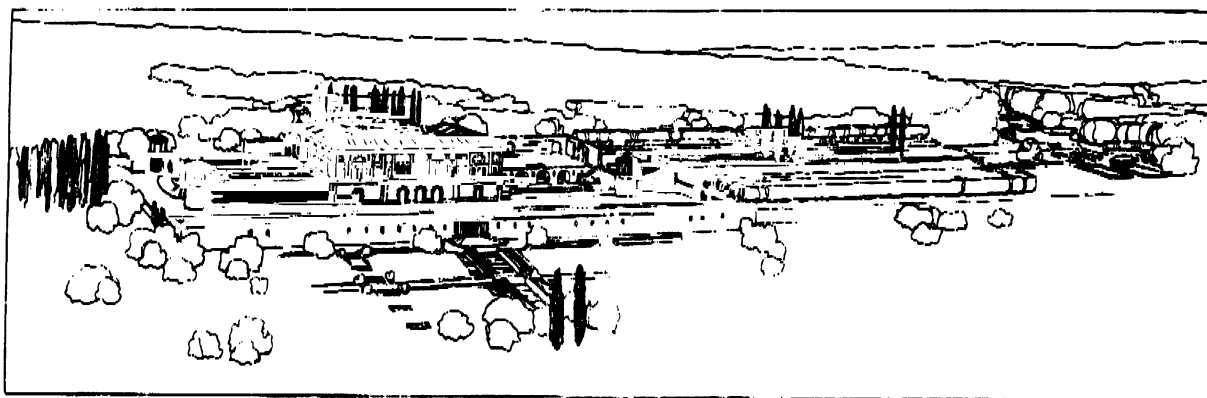
Villa Medici, Fiesole.

their disposal gardens made the strongest appeal. In the days of Lorenzo de Medici at Florence, one reads of how the greatest minds loved to commune together in gardens. The Villa Medici at Fiesole still stands much as the first Cosimo built it, and on the broad terrace or in the loggia the Platonic Academy would meet to conduct their profound arguments in sight of the distant towers of Florence. These were the early attempts of expression in the garden, rising from the need of surroundings to give that enjoyment of the present so richly described by Boccaccio. All the intricate machinery of garden design was set to work, and through the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries design slowly advanced in the wake of knowledge. The sixteenth century is the golden

* Burckhardt, "The Renaissance in Italy."

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age of Italian Renaissance art, but it was not until the following century that technique was able, or had the opportunity, to express the many sides of the mind in one garden. The long low lines of the Villa Medici carved out of the hill describe in their simple way the dignity of learning. The subtleties of a single personality are here lost in a wider range of expression. While expres-



Villa Madama, Rome.

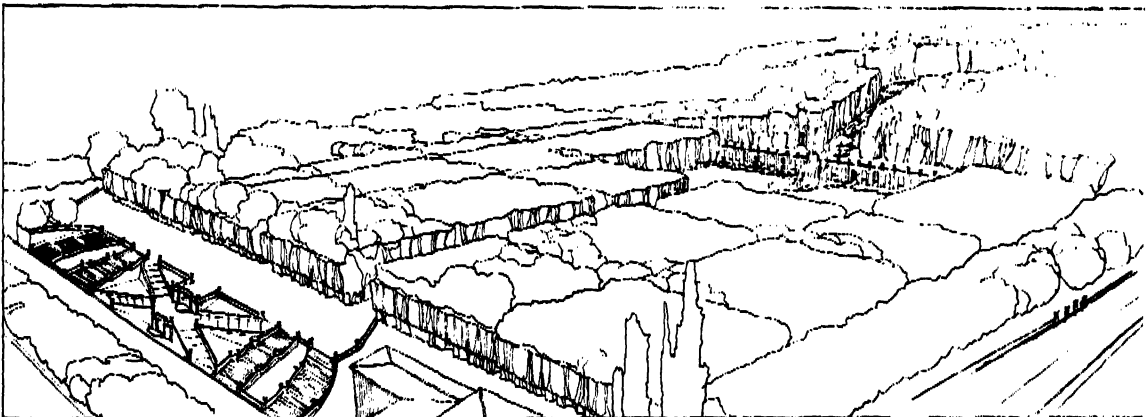
sion in any work of art is highly complex, in gardens especially the personal side may be swamped by stronger outside influences. In the early part of the Renaissance, the whole outlook on life was coloured by the study of antiquity. Greek and Roman manuscripts were eagerly sought. The philosophy of the ancients became that of the day. All over Italy men turned to the ruins of ancient Rome to provide them with inspiration to build in the spirit of the new. Though at no time was native talent entirely overwhelmed by the influence of the humanists, up to the fifteenth century the finer shades of expression were lost. In the sixteenth century the humanists fell, and genius found its natural expression.

The Italians of the Renaissance were a passionate people. A whole city could be stirred by the elocution of one man, and then turn and send him to the stake. The strength that had made Rome mistress of the world was disseminated in internal strife. Individuals could not unite. The Romans were as fond of gardens as the Renaissance Italians, and without the sense of imperialism behind, such hills as the Palatine would not have been subdued so ruthlessly as they were. Rome produced great individuals, but never so great as to

VILLA GAMBERAIA

rival the empire. In the letters of Pliny are admirable descriptions of gardens and contemporary garden life. Pliny was an individualist, but his gardens were not his own so much as Roman, and because of this they surely overrode the subtler feelings of both himself and country. Having no great national force to express, and with ancient Rome by this time a shadow of the past, the later Tuscan gardens were able to mingle and present the very finest shades of individual and nature. Here lies the secret of their delicacy and charm.

The evolution of the Villa Gamberaia can be traced from the quattrocento Florentine gardens of Michelozzo, that include the Villa Medici at Fiesole. From there, interest almost at once turns to Rome, soon eclipsing all other states in its rapid rise to power. In 1516, Cardinal Giuliano de Medici began the Villa Madama, which stands at the parting of the ways between the homeliness of Florence and the pomp of Rome. The papacy was now a mighty temporal as well as spiritual power. Mindful of the past to which they were heirs, the Princes of the Church began to build themselves homes on the lines of those of the Roman Empire. The Villa Madama was intended as a great house of

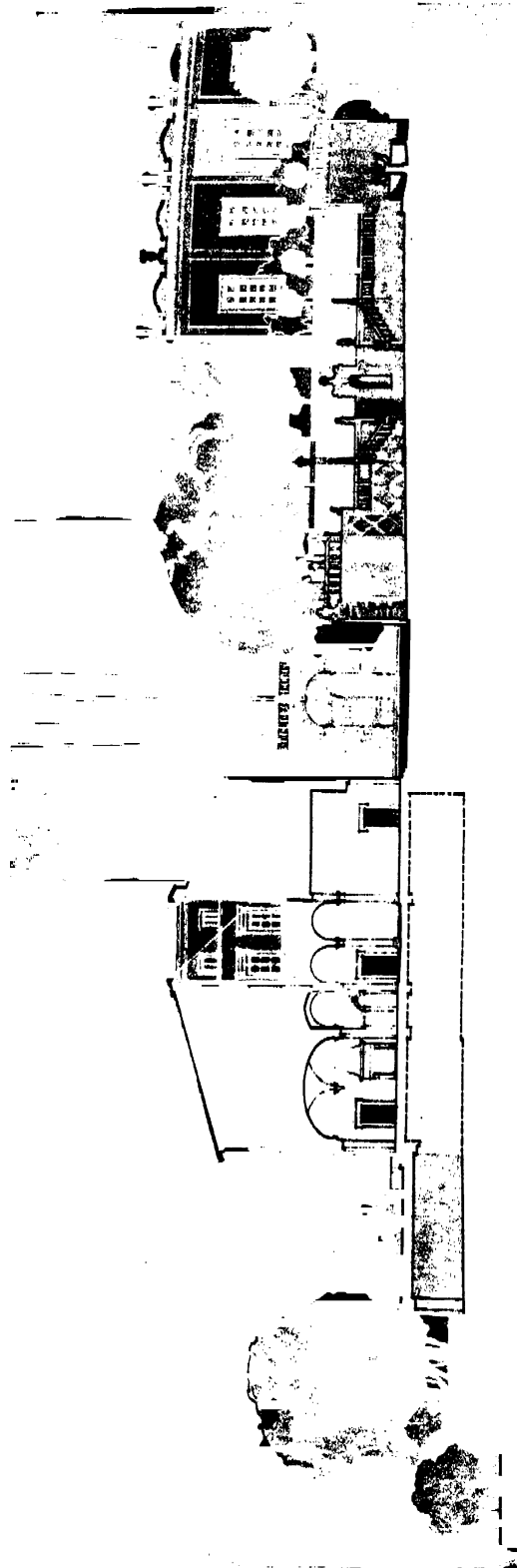


Villa Torlonia, Frascati.

entertaining just outside Rome, and though never completed, in its main lines is a pure reincarnation of antiquity. Few ancient Roman villas surpassed it in splendour of size or efficiency of planning. But the germ of individuality was abroad even under the cloak of a Cardinal, and in 1550, the most dramatic garden in Europe was undertaken at Tivoli for Cardinal Hippolito d'Este. The



Villa Gamberaia: Elevation to West.



Villa Gamberaia: Section Z-Z.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

Villa d'Este (page 72) is in no way equal in technique or refinement to the Villa Madama. The power it expresses is that of a Cardinal of the Church, but a touch of personality lightens it up and gives it a forceful charm of its own. Though the terraces are simple to an extreme, a host of means are employed to make the splendour of the whole overwhelm the senses. After the completion of the Villa d'Este, design in Rome developed rapidly. There was no such thing as a garden architect distinct from an architect of building. The universality of the time realised that the two arts were one, and it is therefore not strange to find that Vignola, known to the world as architect of the Church of the Jesuits in Rome, was also the genius of the greatest gardens of the latter half of the century. Vignola's opportunity lay in expressing the grandeur rather than the intimacy of the Roman Cardinals. The drama of the Villa d'Este is accordingly an inspiration, though a superior mastery of technique produced gardens of equal imagination and a greater refinement. The Villa Lante at Bagnaia (page 70) is carried out in every detail with perfect unity and delicacy, and is possibly the finest of the gardens designed first for entertaining. It was from the great gardens of Rome that France later drew inspiration for developing the entertaining garden to its ultimate stage.

In Florence, which had been quietly progressing, the personal side of the garden continued to develop in the wake of the individual. Villas round Florence in the sixteenth century are supposed to have numbered thousands. Apart from the Boboli gardens, scarcely one of them could have been so striking or grand as the smallest of the handful at Frascati, outside Rome. Each, however, contained an element of humanity that was its own. In contrast to that of the Cardinals, the power of the Florentines lay to a certain extent in the soil. The country villa often served as much for a farm as for a pleasure-house, and thereby established a closer bond between man and nature. To the north of Fiesole there is a villa, half farm, half pleasure-house, where the garden wanders away up the hillside among freely planted olive-trees. Stone steps, a seat, or a piece of rough terracing here and there invite one onwards. It is the garden of an olive grove. The Florentine was feeling his way to a place no less restfully composed



Villa Gamberaia: The Approach.

(Viewpoint A on plan.)

VILLA GAMBERAIA

but more gently harnessed than that of his Roman contemporary. The end of the sixteenth century probably saw the larger proportion of gardens round Florence asymmetrical in their planning, some of them haphazard in their stringing together of formal parts, but others very wisely, if simply, composed in relation to their surroundings. From all these sources, and to a certain extent from the



Photo, Miss B. Scott.

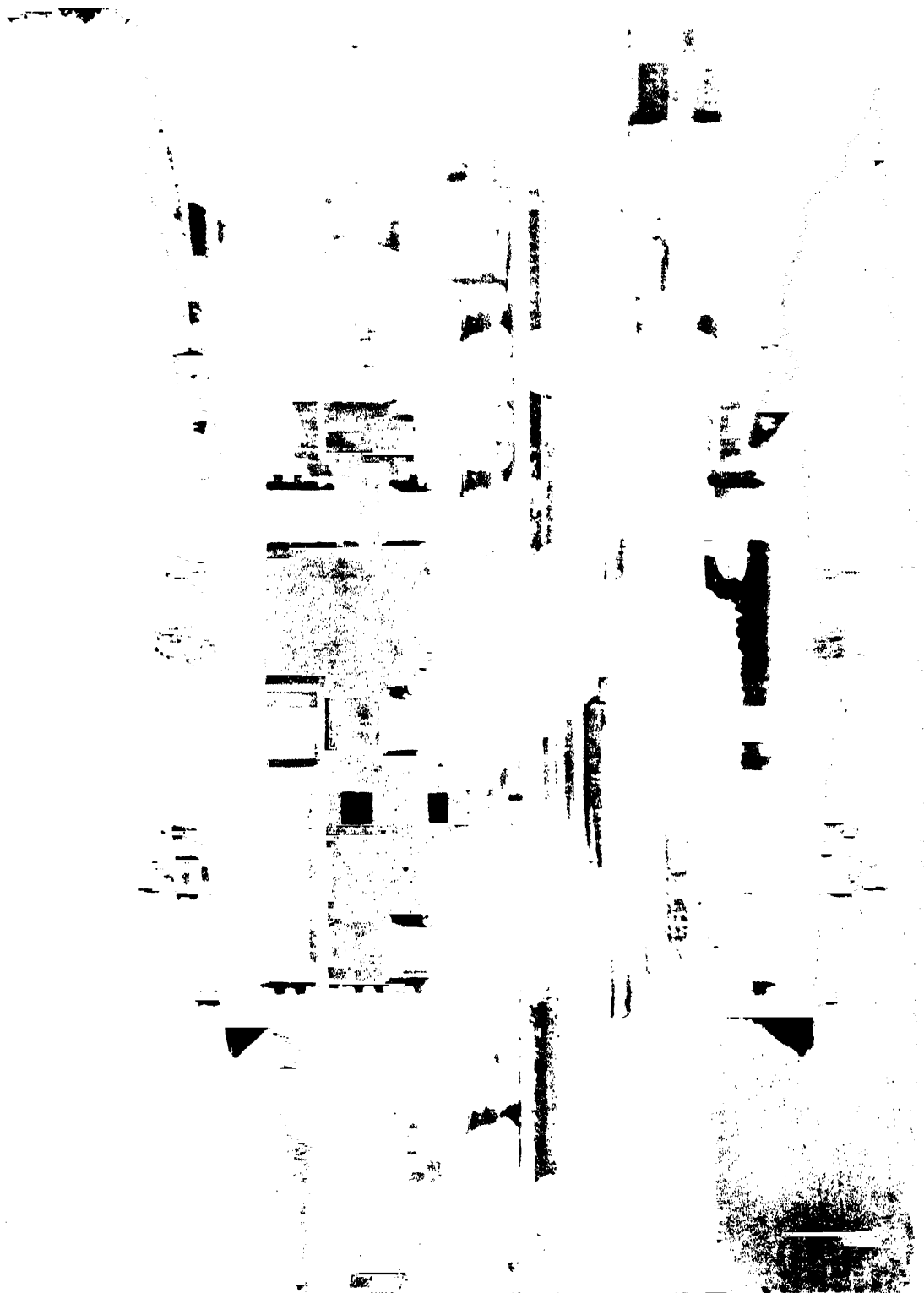
Villa Gamberaia: The Terrace.

(Viewpoint B on plan.)

magnificent contemporary Roman planning, sufficient technique was acquired by the beginning of the seventeenth century to evolve the Villa Gamberaia.

Little is known of its history. A house was in existence in 1398, and early in the sixteenth century the famous Florentine and Sienese architects, the Rossellini, lived here with their father. The place as it stands to-day probably dates from about 1610.

The village of Settignano is some five miles east of Florence, on the lower

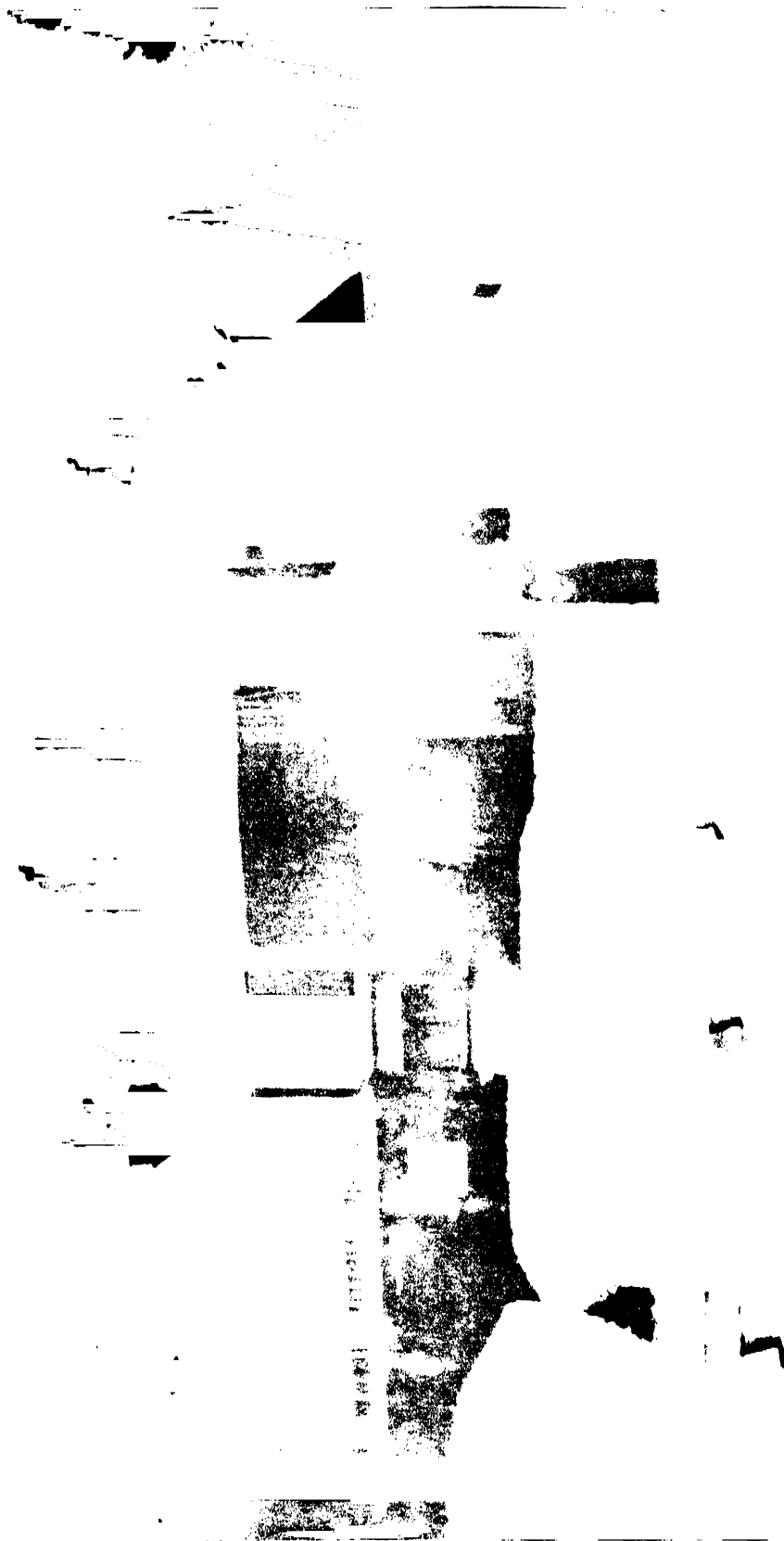


Villa Gamberaia: The Water Garden.
(Viewpoint C on plan.)

VILLA GAMBERAIA

slopes of the same range of hills that is crowned by Fiesole. Gamberaia lies on about the same level, and half a mile beyond. The lane passes the entrance, under a bridge that supports the long alley, and so on up the hill to one of those wayside altars where the valley of the Arno lies outstretched. On all sides nature teems with life. Here and there a villa or a farmhouse, marked by cypress, stands out white and homely on slopes of softly changing greys and greens. In the distance the blue hills gather round the city. For the moment the villa is out of sight, but lower down the lane it can be seen from above, spreading along the natural levels and bathed in sun.

The peculiarity of the site lay in the roads that enclose it on three sides. The shape filled is an elongated irregular area of little more than two acres. Privacy from the roads, with complete command of the view, is worked into a garden that has every variety in itself. It is due to the skilful planning that there hangs over the whole a sense of everlasting peace. The very simplicity of the materials that the Italian had at his disposal, evergreens, stone, and water, enabled him to be richer in the form of his pattern. The plan of Gamberaia is a masterpiece of composition. A long strip of grass, starting from the cypresses and leading out into the view, is stretched from one extremity to the other. The house is placed adjoining, and extends its façade in arches along it as if in sympathy with the great length. Round the house, binding the two still more firmly together, is a band of grass as broad as the alley. On the axis of the house, and lightly connected with it by a stone path, is a grotto garden. The composition of house, alley, and grotto is thus stabilised. It only remained to fill in the spaces of the pattern in such a way as not to disturb the balance. Of these, the water parterre is the most interesting feature, and this was balanced by a simple lemon garden, the block of outhouses, and the cypress garden that terminates the long alley. The boscos equalise themselves. The scheme is in perfect balance about a point that coincides with the fine east entrance door. As pattern design, the length of the alley contrasts with the square house and its interestingly shaped grotto, which again contrast with themselves. The gardens inside the spaces are all foiled by the same simple alley and grass band.



Villa Gamberaia: The Long Alley.
(Viewpoint D on plan.)



Villa Gamberaia: The Long Alley.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)



Villa Gamberaia: Approach to Grotto Garden.
(Viewpoint F on plan.)



Villa Gamberaia: The Grotto Garden.

(Viewpoint G on plan.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN

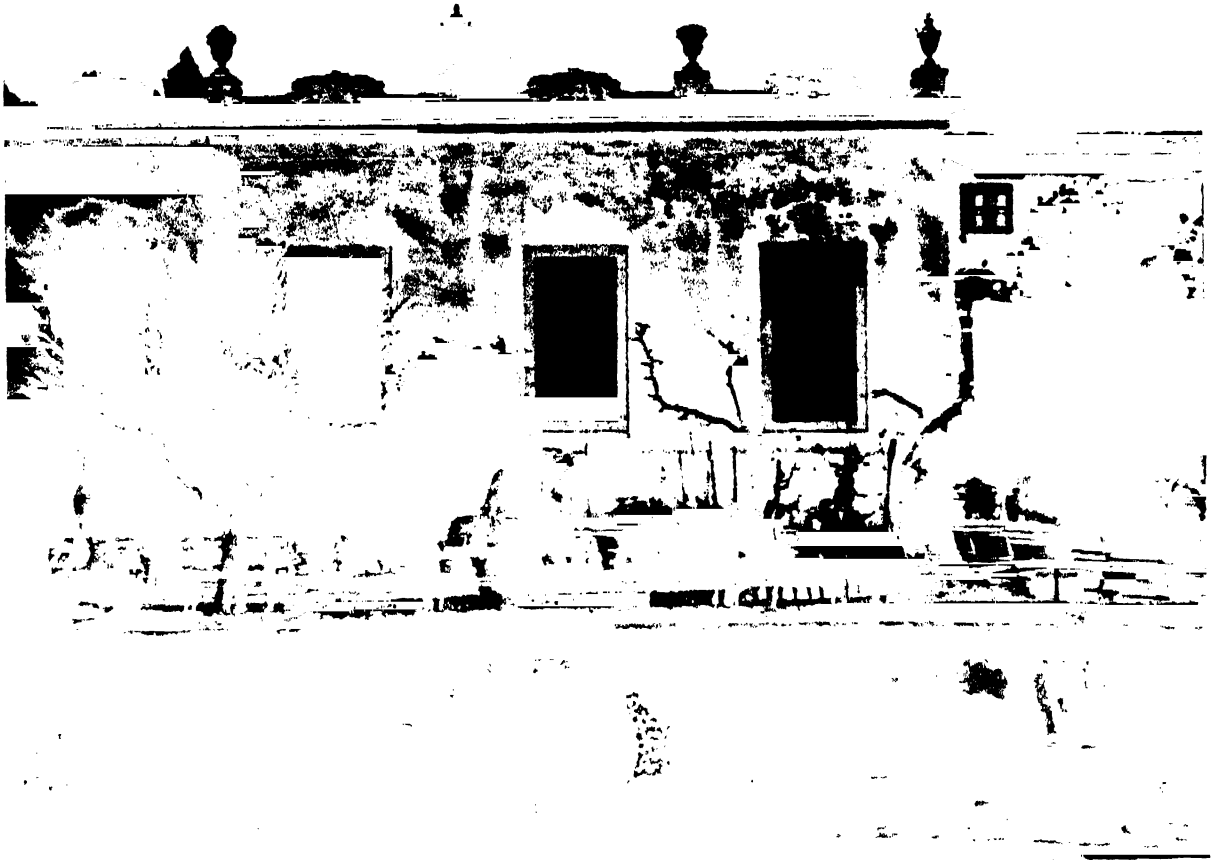
The plan is so contrived that no fewer than six or seven different gardens are within speaking distance of the house.

The approach to this beautiful place may have led down to an entrance in the wall below the main terrace, and people were able to come and go without in any way interfering with the garden immediately round the house. Before the west façade the broad simple terrace alone separates the building from the view. Stone dogs sitting on the low parapet break up a line that might be too abrupt, and mingle with the middle distance. Passing along this terrace, one enters the water garden, extending away from the south façade and enclosed from the view by dark walls of hedge. Differing slightly from the lines of the original design, everything in this garden is gay and fanciful. Low box hedges and shapes are dotted in neat array, and pools reflect the sky or buildings. Over all there is the note of singing frogs, blending together in a pæan of praise. From this garden one passes through clipped yews into the long alley. Pico della Mirandola's words on the dignity of man are recalled in this stately walk. To the right it sweeps out across the balustrade into the distance; to the left it passes between the east wall of the house and the retaining walls of the lemon garden, and disappears into the shadows of the cypress grove. Now one approaches the entrance to the grotto garden, and pride has its fall; the place is frankly grinning. Up the steps one scrambles on to the lemon garden, where the air blows briskly. Beyond this lies the mystery of the *illex bosco*, of twisted trunks and tangled branches that exclude the sky. Through this one passes out again to the spaciousness of the alley, and so into the cypress grove, where the slender ethereal forms cluster round and whisper of eternity.

Throughout the garden the scale varies with the mood of the moment. The house itself is a perfect example of Florentine art in its proportions and restraint. In its solidity it stands for ever amidst a slowly changing garden. The scale of the house is to our modern ideas more than human, but in those days must have attuned to their highly developed minds. The scale of the terrace before the house is as broad as the view, in the water garden it is slightly lowered, is regained in the bowling alley, becomes reduced to the ridiculous in the grotto

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garden, and finishes intensely intimate to great and small alike in the bosco. Colour everywhere is a symphony of greens from deep cypress through varieties of box, yew, ilex, and privet, to the light emerald of lemon-trees and grass. The house is a broken ivory, and is spread through the green around in paving, balustrades, walls, and statuary. Like so many gardens of Florence, the soft



Villa Gamberaia: The Lemon Garden.

(Viewpoint H on plan.)

cool colour takes the place of shade as a protection against the sun. Practically the only considered shade, apart from the cypress garden, are the boscos, placed with immediate access from the house. Shape and form are consistent; the square, blunt house is supported by firm lines of architecture and clipped evergreens. Though the boscos practically adjoin the house, and are themselves the embodiment of nature running free, they are enclosed almost to their full

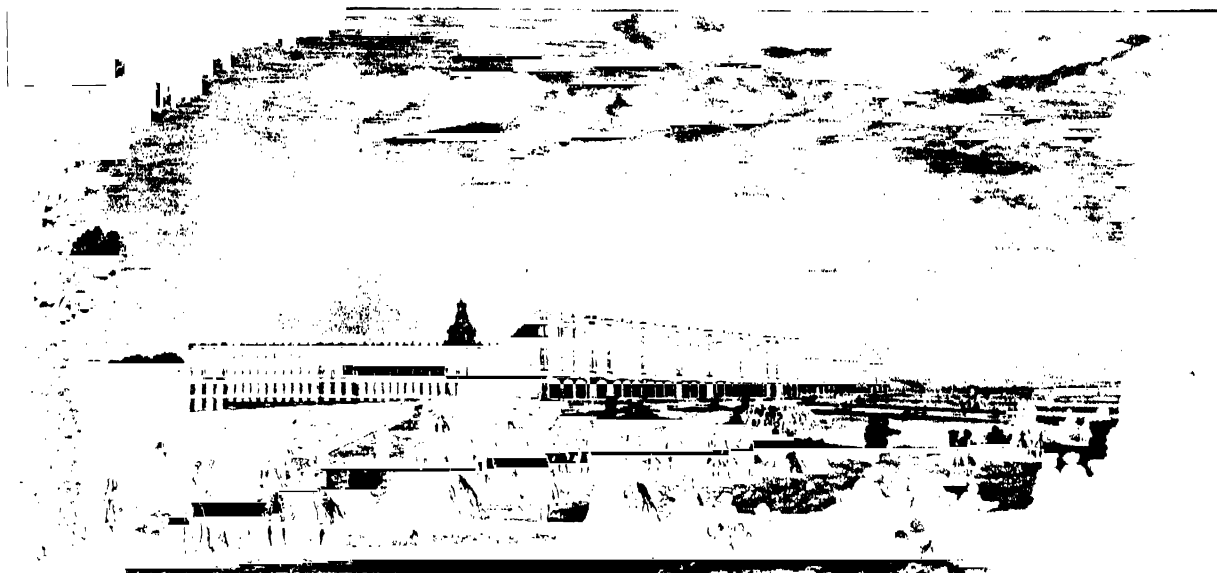
GARDENS AND DESIGN

height by walls. Branches meet overhead, and the simple shape of the ilex above provides in effect a formal roof spanning from wall to wall. Few other trees would be so suitable to their position. The tall slender cypresses are ever present, as splendid a foil in fact to the long horizontal lines that bind the garden to the ground, as they are in association and spirit. Above all, for over three hundred years nature has been slowly working her will, breaking the hard lines of architecture, enriching the garden with interest, and binding all together inextricably.

To step into this garden is to mingle with a personality intensely alive and human, one that shunned ostentation and was not afraid to admit weakness. This mind felt all the passions of the soul that filled the noblest Italians, answering as readily to the peace of nature.



Villa Gamberaia: The Cypress Grove.
(Viewpoint J on plan.)



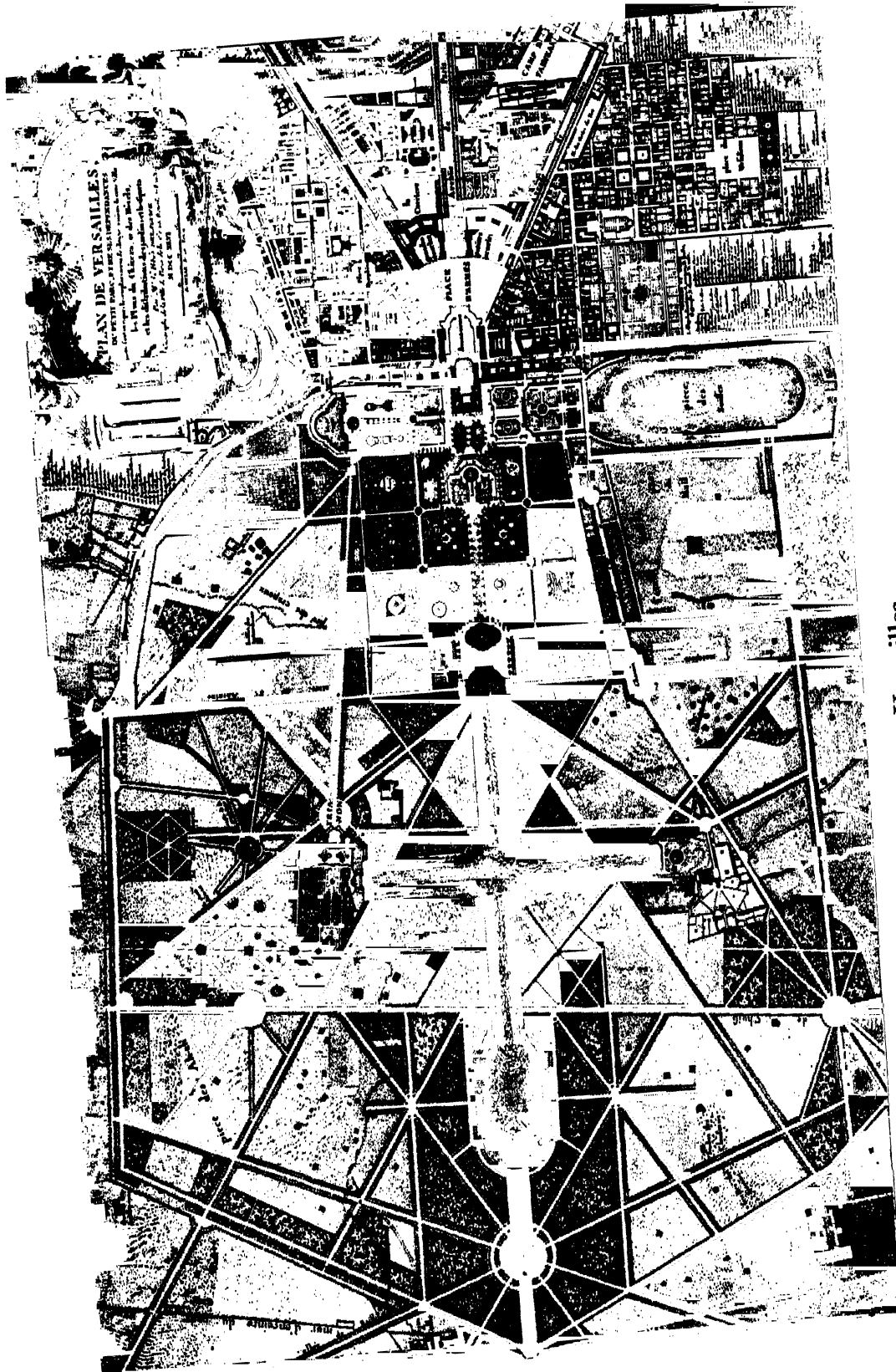
Versailles.

II

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

To pass into France from Italy in the seventeenth century was to cross a barrier more dividing than the Alps. Louis XIV. reigned in state. If Louis smiled, France smiled with him; if Louis frowned, France frowned and trembled. When he walked abroad, picking his way in satin shoes, all France hung upon his steps and lightly cleared the path. It was a time when elegance, wit, and charm were welcome everywhere, and to them the monarch was ever at home in the gardens of Versailles.

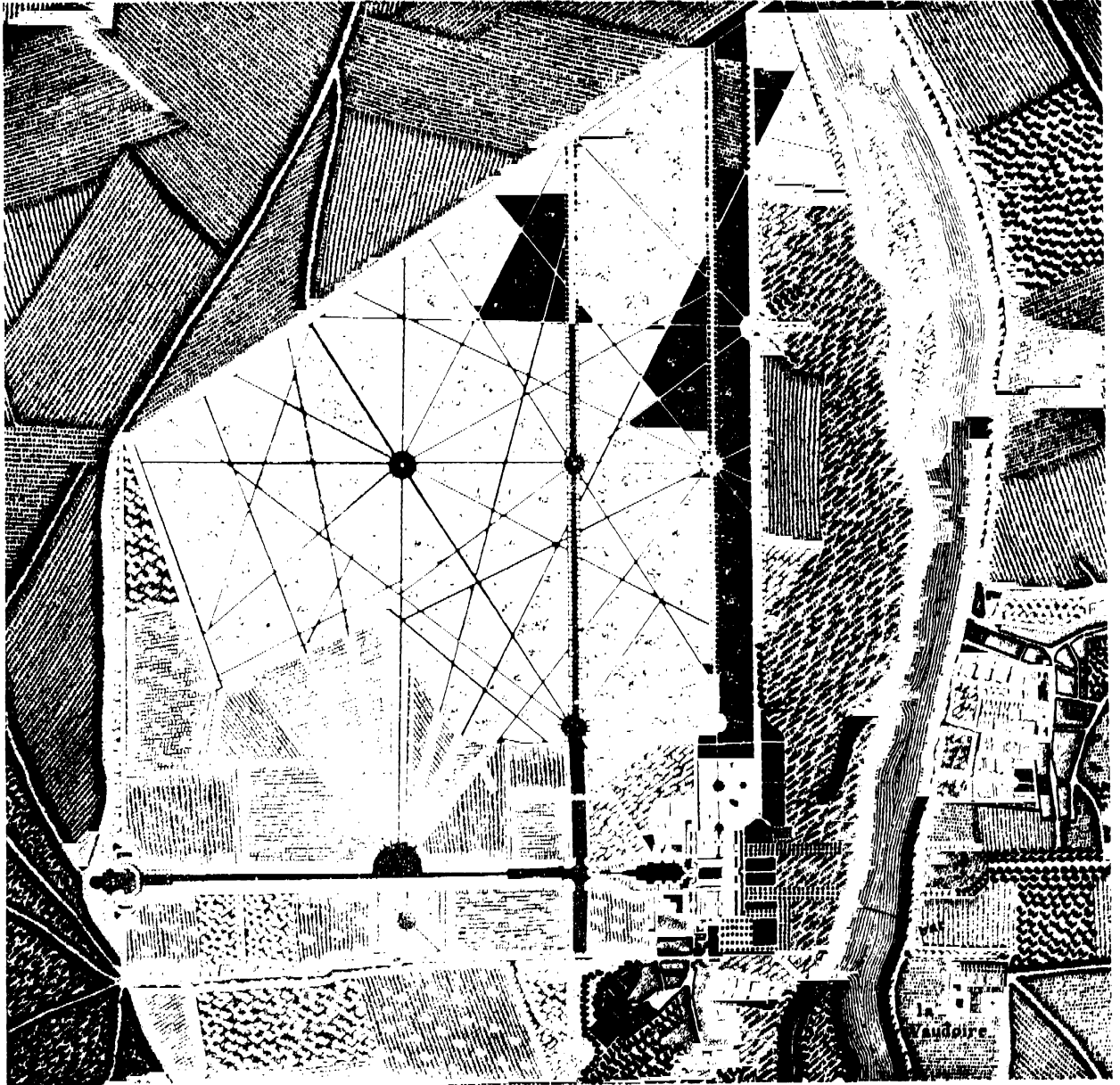
The gesture of contempt that Louis made to the world, he made to the country round his palace. The greater the difficulties, the more wealth was poured forth to overcome them. For years whole armies of men and horses toiled and sweated in turning earth and carting stone. The lake extending beyond the Orangery was dug out of a fever-stricken marsh, causing appalling loss of life to the Swiss Guards who made it. Behind the gigantic work of the gardens lay that of bringing water to the fountains. The supply from local sources soon failed, and a scheme was devised for raising the water of the Seine under its own power up to an aqueduct at Marly, seven miles away. Louis was delighted, and in 1685 water was pouring into Versailles. Even this was



Versailles.
From a plan by the Abbé Delagrive, dated 1746.

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

insufficient. At once he determined on the more ambitious task of tapping the Eure below Chartres. Thirty thousand soldiers were employed, and in two years a canal reached Maintenon. The work of spanning the valley was commenced but never finished, for war then broke out. Forty-eight scarcely completed arches, each thirty metres high, are to-day as an impressive a monument to the monarch as Versailles itself. These enormous efforts were put into



Château de Maisons. (By François Mansart.)



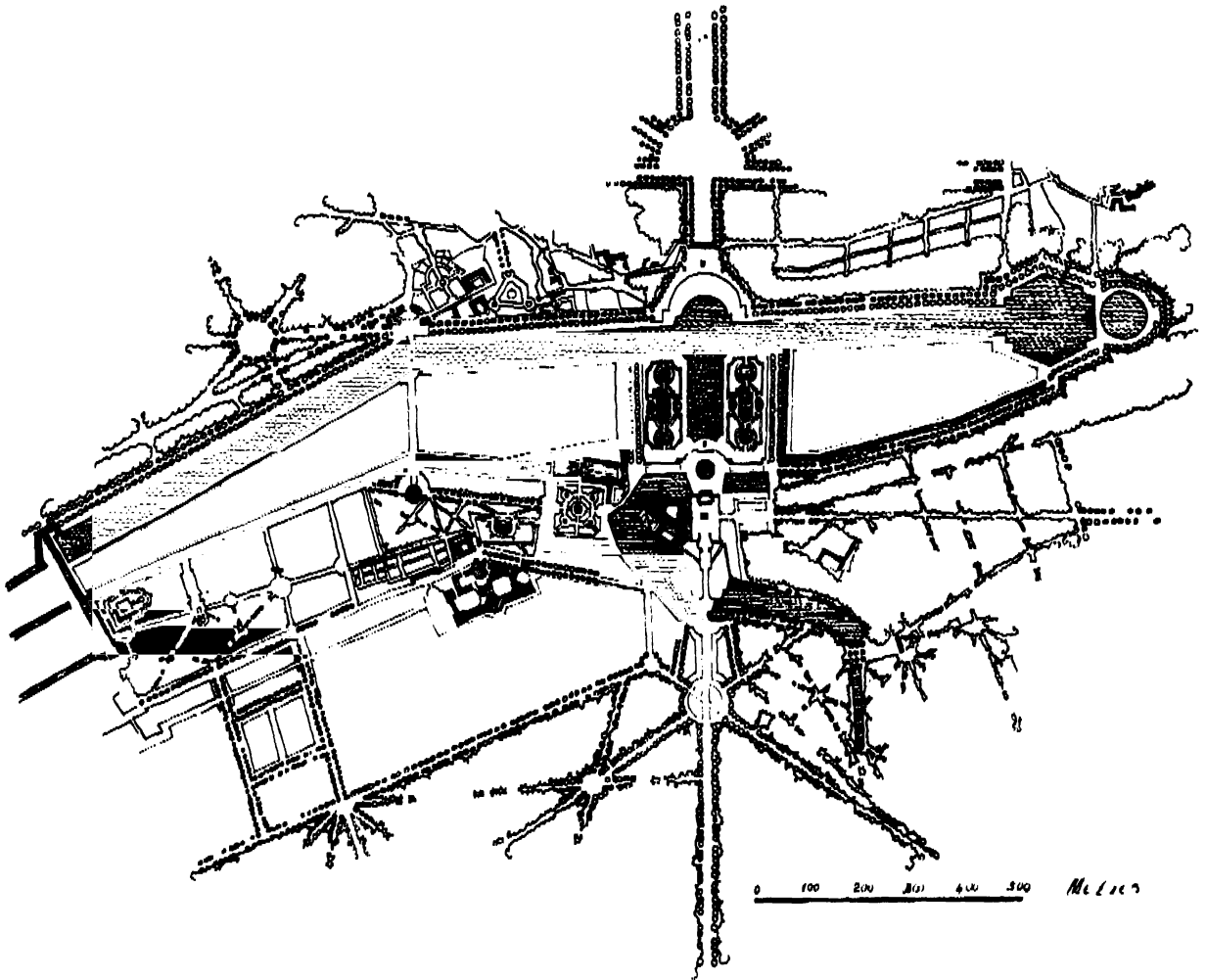
Chantilly.

Above : From the South.

Below : From the North. (L'Archives Photographiques d'Art et d'Histoire.)

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

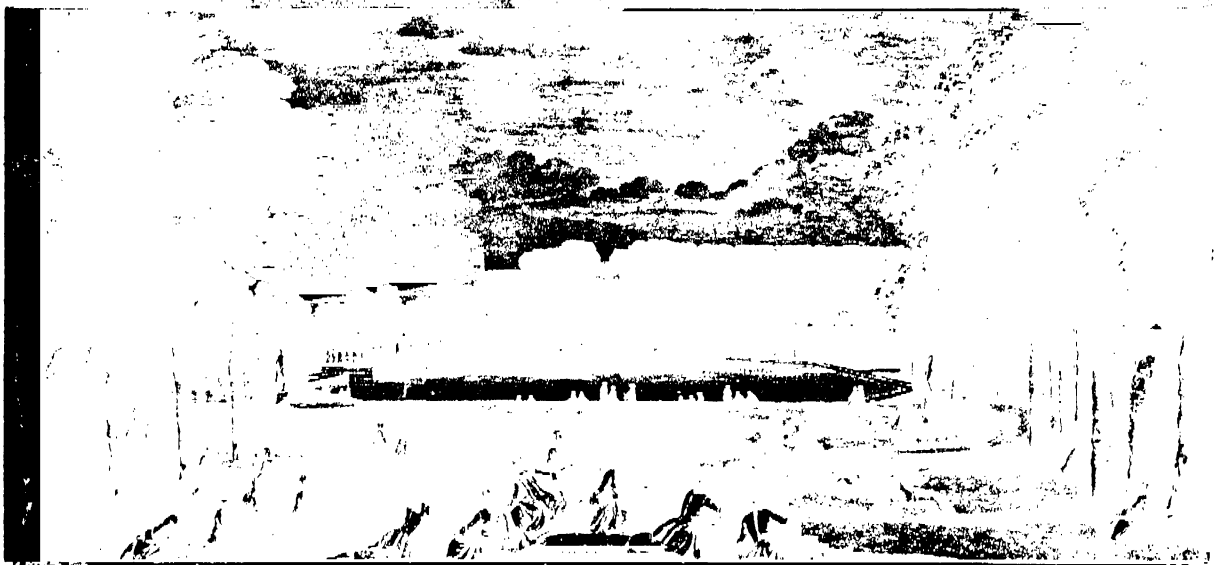
a garden that was to be a perfect setting for the Sun King and his Court. The dark side, the loss of life and the enormous expense that crippled the whole country, gave way to pleasure. Any hot summer's day was sufficient to draw people from palace and town. All who were "reasonably dressed" were admitted to the park, and countrymen's carts jostled those of noblemen.



Chantilly.

On the plage before the palace the crowds moved slowly along terraces and walks, the full skirts of women contrasting with the elegant forms of men. If you followed the stateliest group of people, you would see Louis the most perfectly dressed and stately of them all. When they disappeared down the alleys into the bosquets, and the woods threw back their cries, it was Louis who

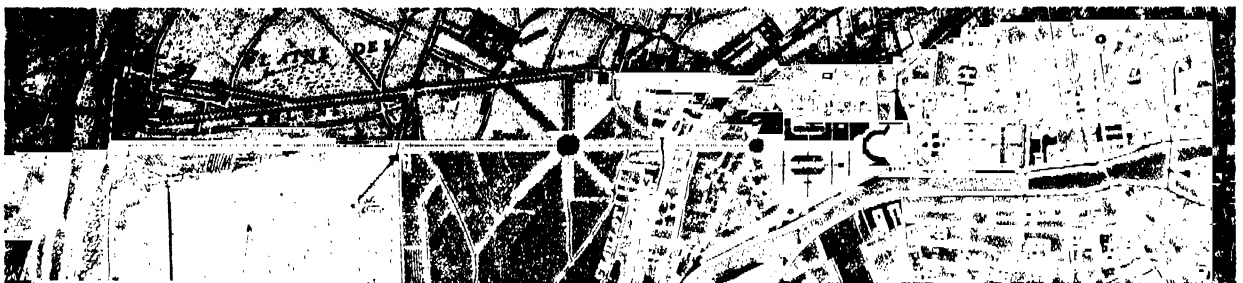
GARDENS AND DESIGN



Vue de la cascade de Sceaux.

Cascade at Sceaux.

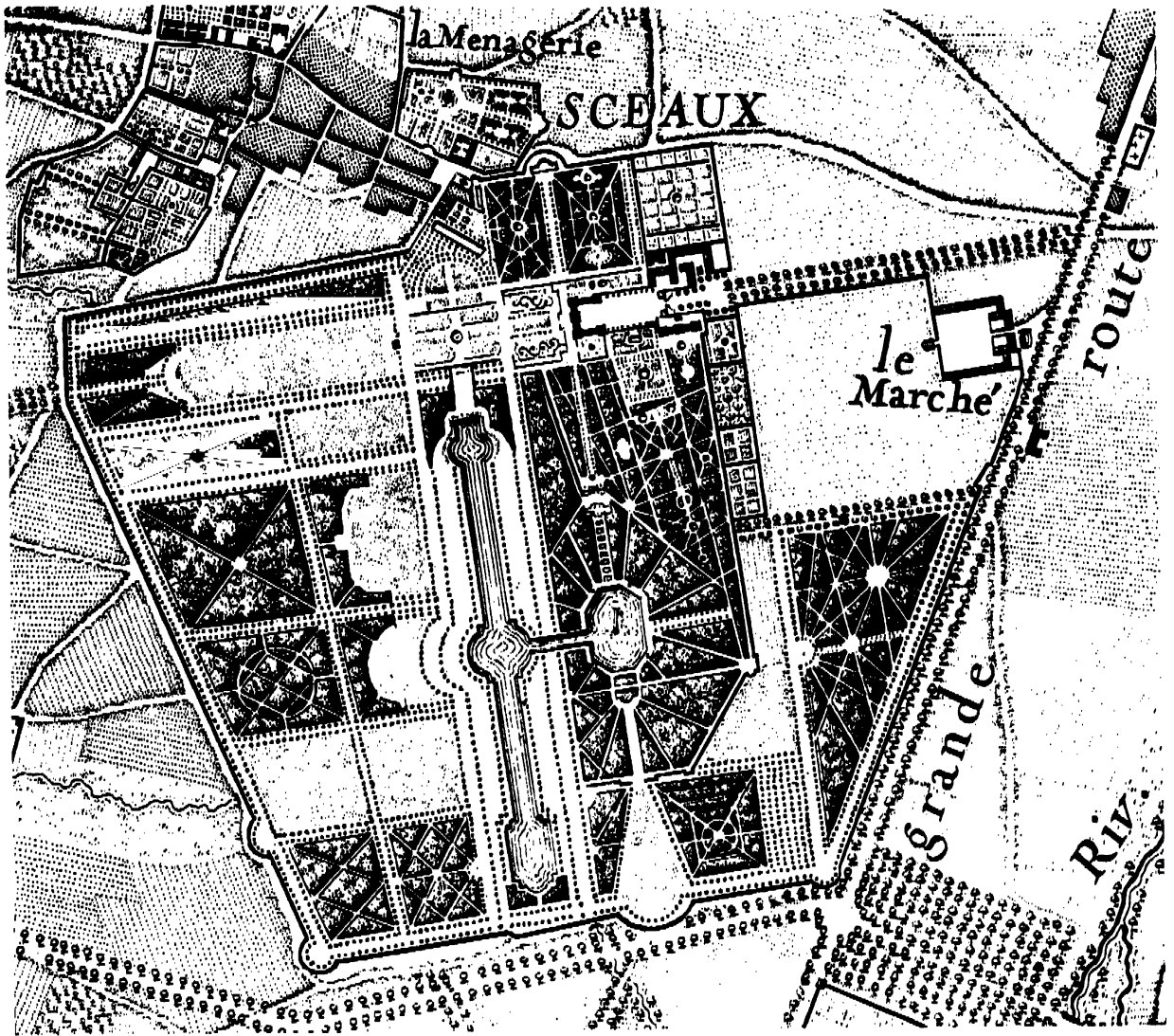
inspired the gaiety. These were the days before youth was lost, and Madame de Maintenon came to sober the Court. When the King and his party voyaged on the grand canal, they could choose a barge or any of the thirty gondolas. Perhaps they would go to the Menagerie to see the elephant and camels, or perhaps to the opposite arm to visualise a Trianon. When they disembarked, sedan chairs and even coaches were at hand to carry home those who wearied of the endless paths and avenues. In the evening, after a rest, a collation might be taken in one of the bosquet gardens. Weird and wonderful designs in dishes arrived, brought by light-footed servants who slipped through the trees and away, and were scarcely seen at all. In the woods around soft music played. Afterwards, perhaps, our party moved on to the circular colonnade, there like



The Tuileries and Champ Elysées in 1740.

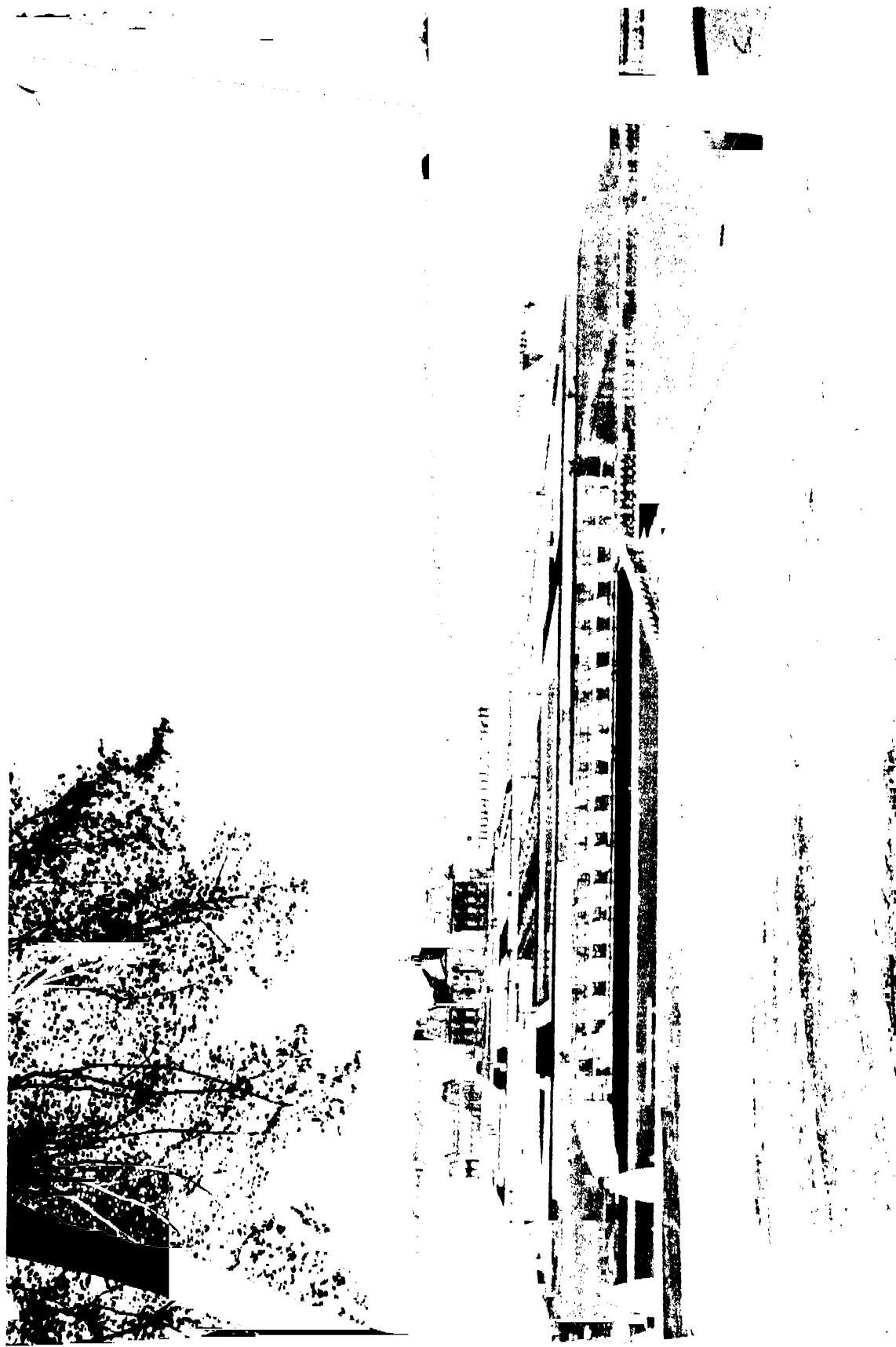
LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

wraiths in the moonlight to dance round and round to the murmur of fountains, until the moon paled and the stars began to fade. Sometimes there was a fête, and the whole of the gardens stirred themselves. Imagine the great fête of 1664. It lasted three days, and consisted of a pageant entitled "The Pleasures of the



Sceaux.

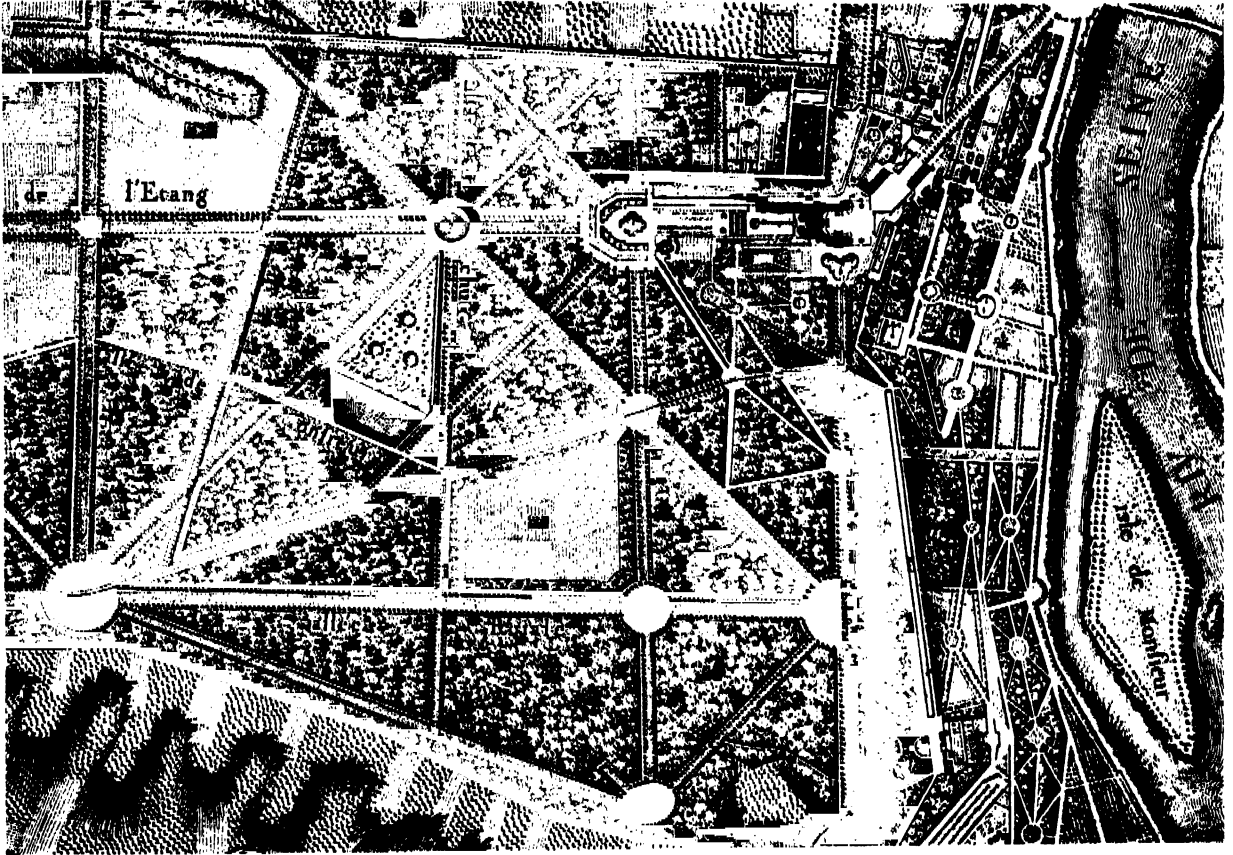
Enchanted Isle." First of all, gaily dressed knights tilted up and down the Tapis Vert, at that time an alley of beaten earth. Then a pageant was formed and wound in and out of the walks. The Chariot of Time led off, and was followed by the Centuries and Seasons, with dancing fauns, bacchantes, shepherds and shepherdesses, and Pan bringing up the rear. On the second day



Vaux-le-Vicomte.

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

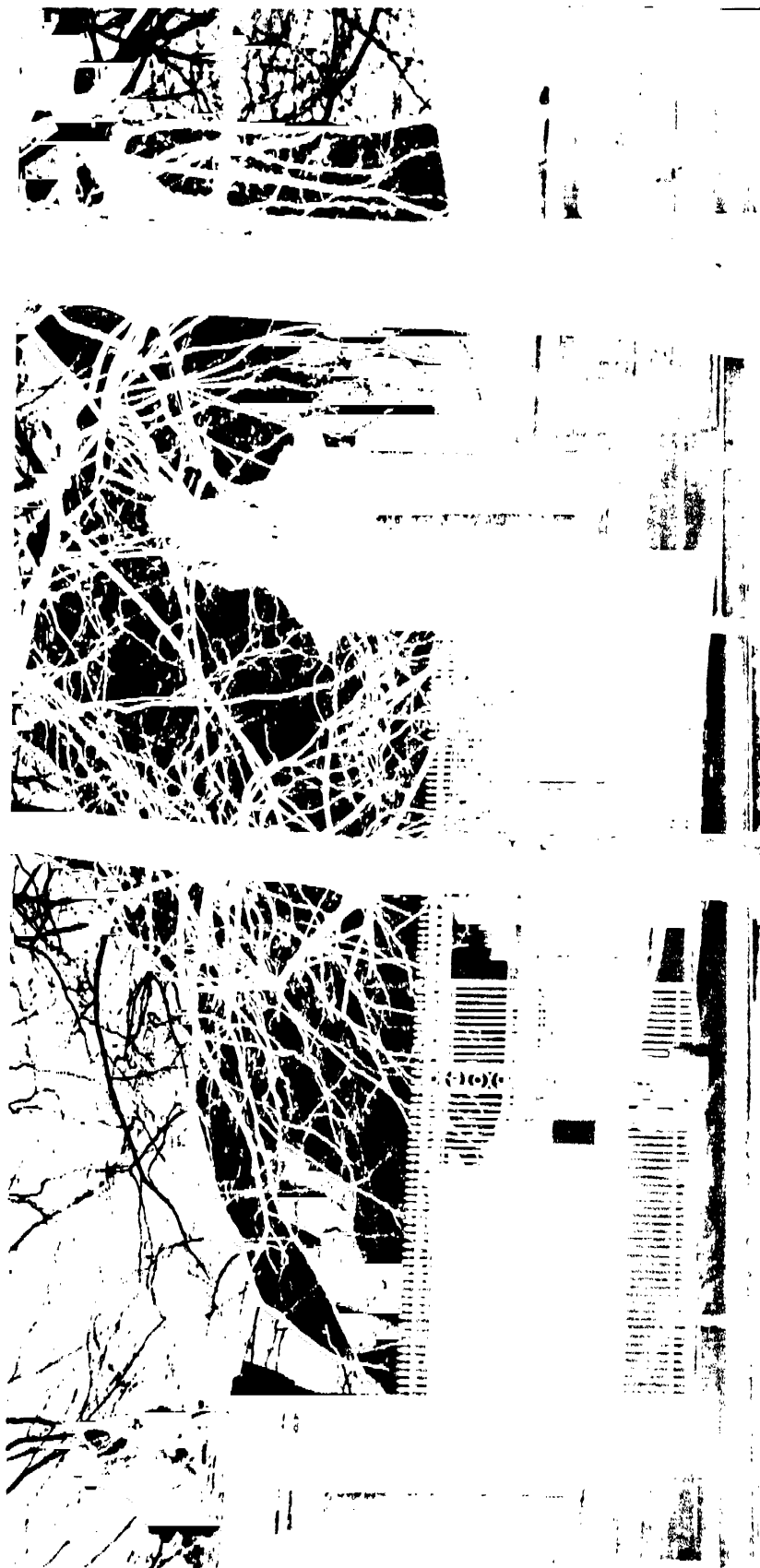
the principal feature was Molière's play "Princesse d'Elide." In the evening of the third day, all flocked to the basin of Apollo. Here was an island, and on the island stood an enchanted castle, which belonged to no less a person than the redoubtable sorceress who held Ruggiero in captivity. Excitement waxed intense. Three ladies advanced from the island reciting verses, two of them poised on the backs of whales, and one on a sea monster. A burst of fireworks



S. Cloud.

then engulfed the island, consumed them all, and so finished the ballet. People dispersed, and the fête was over.

These were the gardens in the height of their glory. History shows that not even the Grand Trianon, built in 1670 and a few years later pulled down and rebuilt, could satisfy the King's passion for novelty. He settled on Marly, a beautiful whim that was to cost nearly as much as the gardens of Versailles.

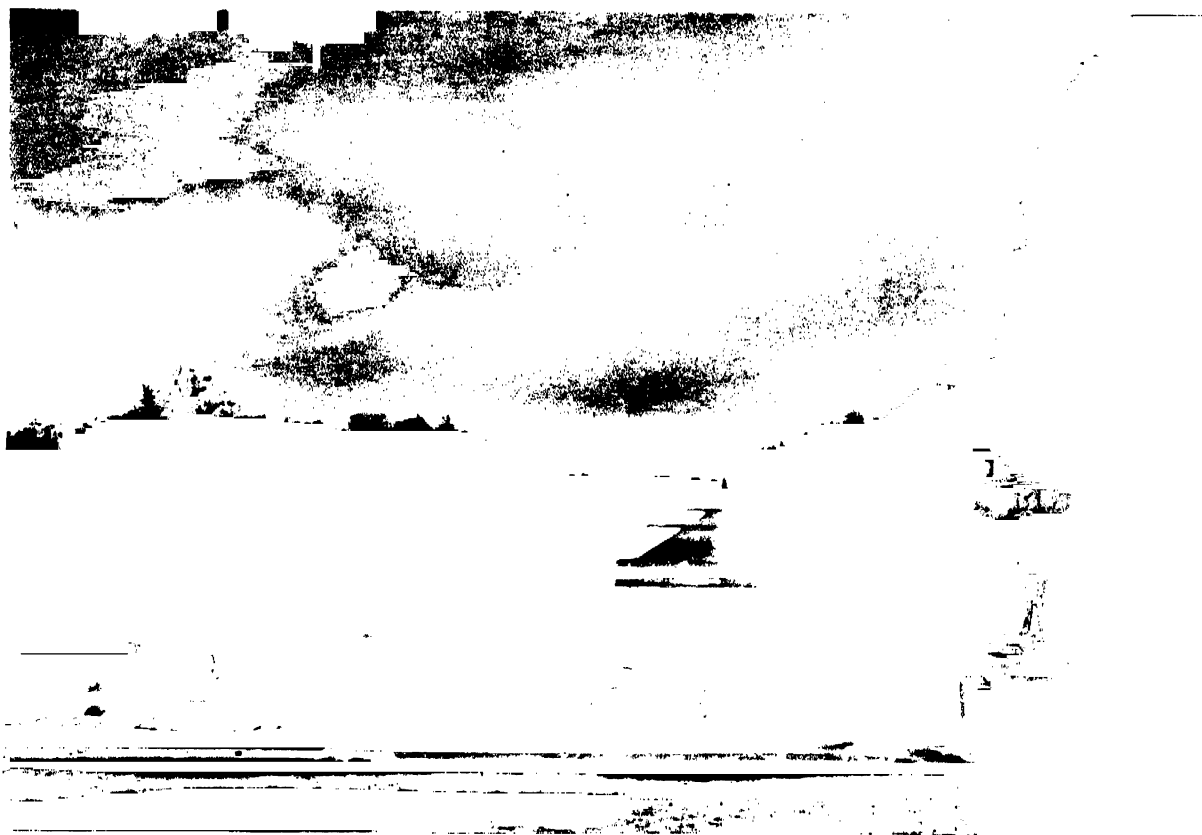


Versailles: Approach of the Hundred Steps.
(Viewpoint B on plan.)

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

Garden design in France begins along the banks of the Loire. In the early Renaissance Paris was turbulent, and the remoteness of the Touraine combined with the beautiful country to call there Francis I. and his Court. The King loved building. His campaign in Italy may not have been a success politically, but it gave him a vital insight into the Renaissance. For a long time, however, tradition in France held out against the Italian architects and craftsmen who returned with him, and only in detail was the Italian influence noticeable. The châteaux of the day were mediæval castles with elegant trimmings. If the châteaux had little understanding of the contemporary Italian villa, the garden had still less. Gardens were laid out, but happening to go beyond an enclosure, they only did so to spread round the walls in simple squares with little relation to the buildings themselves. These romantic places created the two traditions of water and avenues that were to influence the whole future of French gardens. It was reflections and association that a little later induced Philibert de l'Orme to stretch the new wing of Chenonceaux across the Cher. The tradition of avenues rose from hunting on a scale that the Italians never achieved. Great forests were preserved, and avenues and vistas cut through from end to end in a network of ways. At first the ways were utilitarian, but from them sprang the co-ordination in planning that is behind not only the gardens, but the towns and cities of France. Towards the end of the sixteenth century Paris offered more attractions, and the Court slowly moved from the Loire. Italian influence now became marked. The planning of house, garden, and forest began to be considered as one unit. In 1642, François Mansart designed the Château de Maisons near Paris, where the fine avenue approach to the house connects to a scheme of avenues in the forest.

With the accession of Louis XIV., that proud monarch concentrated on building, and in Le Nôtre found a lieutenant worthy of carrying unity to its supreme stage. André Le Nôtre was born in Paris in 1615. He died in 1700, not having known a day's illness. From the first he had every opportunity. His father was head gardener in the Tuileries, and sent André into the studio of Simon Vouet. Here he not only learnt something of composition, but



Versailles.

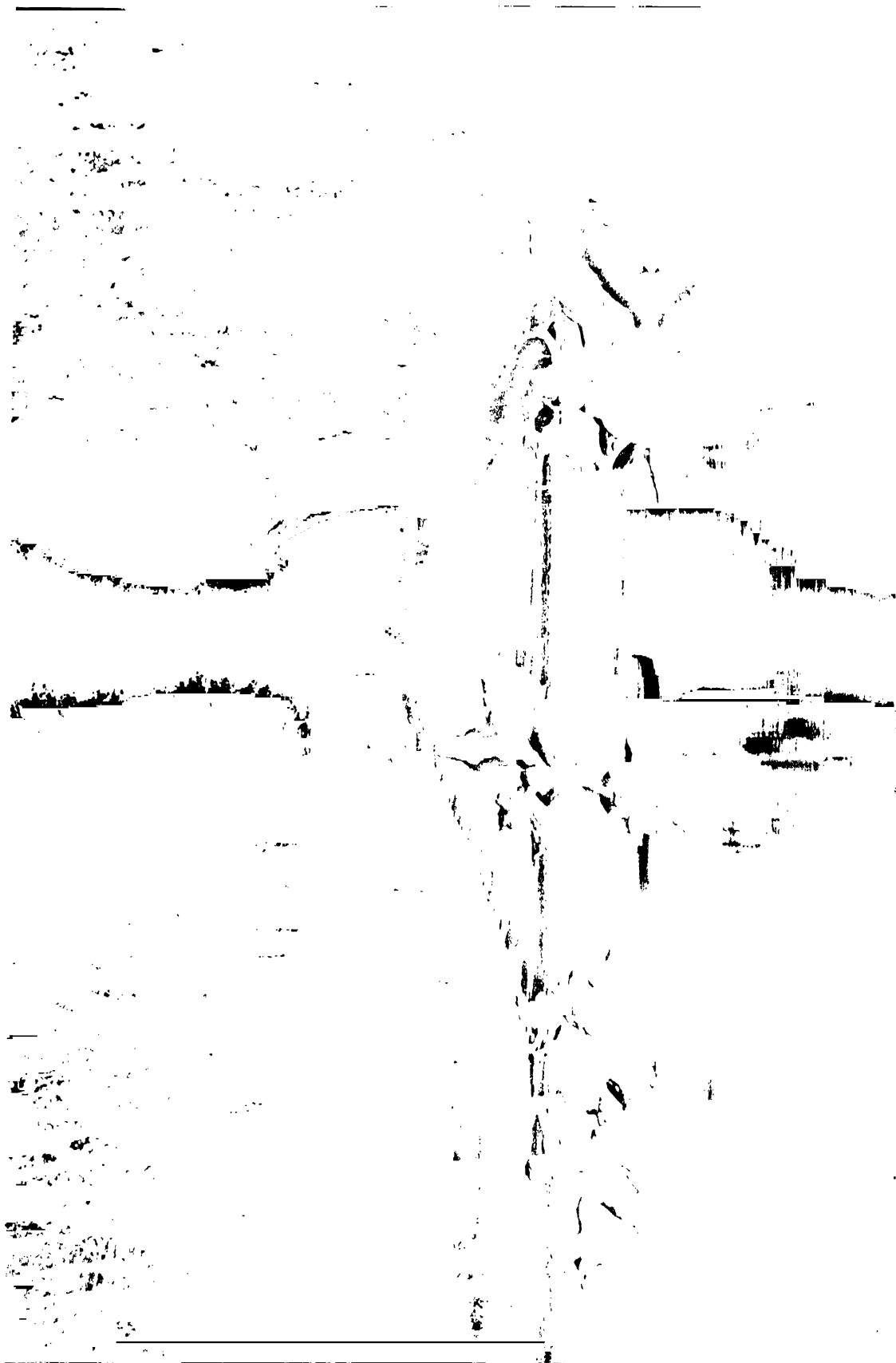
Above : The Tapis Vert and the Grand Canal. (Viewpoint G on plan.)

Below : The Grand Canal. (Viewpoint F on plan.)

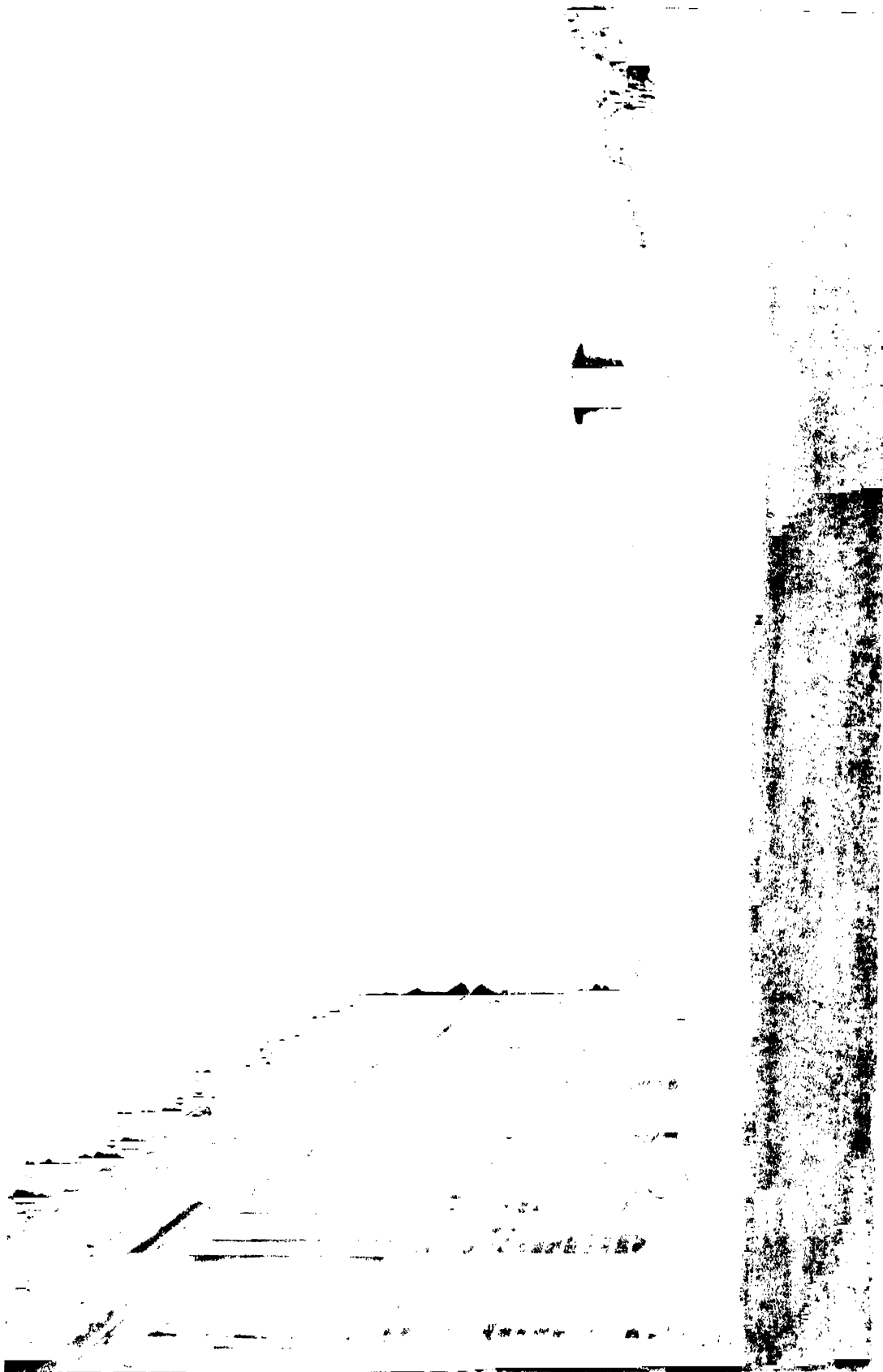
LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

probably began a friendship with Charles Le Brun, a fellow-student, which proved invaluable in after life. One of his earliest works was the addition to the Tuileries. By this he extended the Palace from within the city to beyond the Bois de Boulogne, at that time far outside the walls. This scheme is the Champs Elysées and the Place de l'Etoile of to-day. Then came Vaux-le-Vicomte for Fouquet, the first of the great spectacular gardens. The wealth of parterre, statues, and fountains that lies before the château windows is magnificently staged between varying widths and on levels that conceal surprises. Nothing of its kind had ever before been attempted in France. On August 17, 1661, Fouquet gave his great fête; a few days later he was thrown into prison. His morals were doubtful, but not his artistic perception. Vaux fired the King's ambition sufficiently not only to contemplate garden design on a vast scale, but eventually to move to Versailles the three creators of Vaux, Le Vau the architect, Le Brun the decorator, and Le Nôtre, the garden designer.

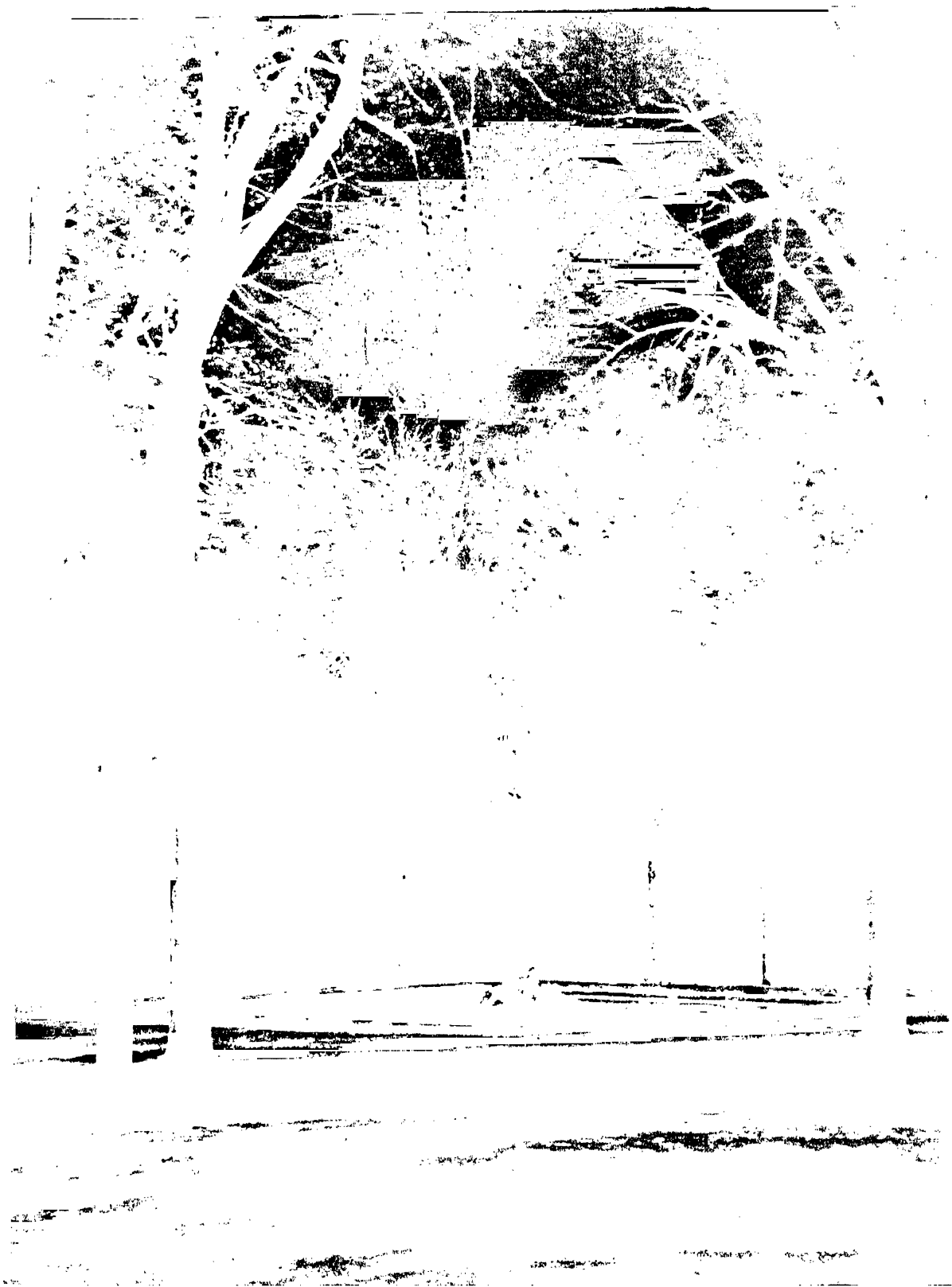
In 1663, Le Nôtre was commissioned to add gardens to Chantilly, the home of the great Condé. The existing château, mostly destroyed, but since rebuilt, stood surrounded by a broad moat. Around this again lay the forest of Chantilly, crossed and recrossed by its avenues. Le Nôtre grasped his material, saw that the scale of the château was unequal to his ideas, and made the centre of his conception the statue of the Condé. The design is brilliant. The soldier stands out as nobly among his possessions as he did in the forefront of battle. The great cross axis drives into the heart of the forest on the one side, and on the other carries through the arm of the canal. The vast extent of the canal is associated with the house by water parterre and moat. The fêtes that were held here on the canals and in the woods, splendid as they were, were but a prelude to those held at Versailles. It is said that while Vaux brought fame to Le Nôtre, it was Chantilly that decided the King to entrust him immediately with his own gardens. The age of Versailles did not allow many such places. The King ruled supreme from his bed, and on his favour often depended the very substance of the nobles. Under the artificiality, wigs and paint and powder, there lay an element of power that made France the first country in Europe. Louis had a



Versailles: The Dragon Fountain and Allée d'Eau.
(Viewpoint A on plan.)



Versailles: The Satory Woods.
(Viewpoint C on plan.)



Versailles: In the Bosquets.
(Viewpoint D on plan.)

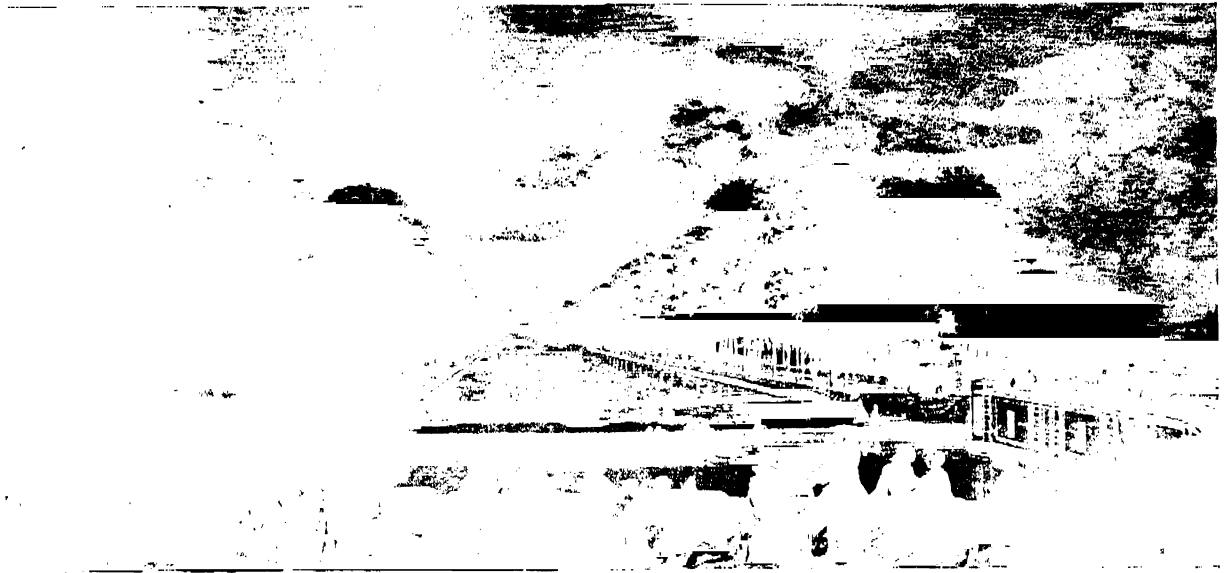


Versailles: The Circular Colonnade.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN

genius for choosing the man for the position. Newly risen ministers reflected in a milder way the ideas of their master, and while the old nobility were wasting themselves at Versailles, they almost alone, outside royalty, undertook any serious building. For them, as well as for the King's family, Le Nôtre designed gardens in the environs of Paris on a scale that is stupendous.

Besides Vaux and Chantilly, Sceaux with its beautiful cascade and canal was built for Colbert. A view terrace a mile and a half in length was added to the existing garden at S. Germain. At Meudon, for the Grand Dauphin, a still more titanic scheme was extended across the country. At S. Cloud,



The Canal at Fontainebleau.

another royal palace, the park was turned into a garden of avenues with cascades and pools. The activities of Le Nôtre were immense and spread beyond France into England and Italy, carrying everywhere some spirit of the pomp of Versailles. The genius of the man suited the age. He himself was not fond of Court life. When the King, with whom he was a favourite, wished to present him with a coat of arms, he protested that he already had one: "Three snails and a cabbage ball in chief, and how can I leave out my spade?" He supplied the background which artists of the time touched up so delicately. By himself he was as bold as was the King beneath his courtliness. His ideas

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

embraced whole areas of country and bent them to his will. When it came to adding on to existing works, he did not attune his scale to theirs. He either put them in their place, as at Chantilly; or frankly ignored them, as at Meudon or Fontainebleau. The two spectacular features that he played with and perfected in nearly every garden were the old traditions of avenues and water.

When Louis XIV. first came to Versailles, it consisted of a hunting-box built for Louis XIII. From the first the hunting and situation attracted him. Le Vau was commissioned to enlarge the existing château, and a suggestion of

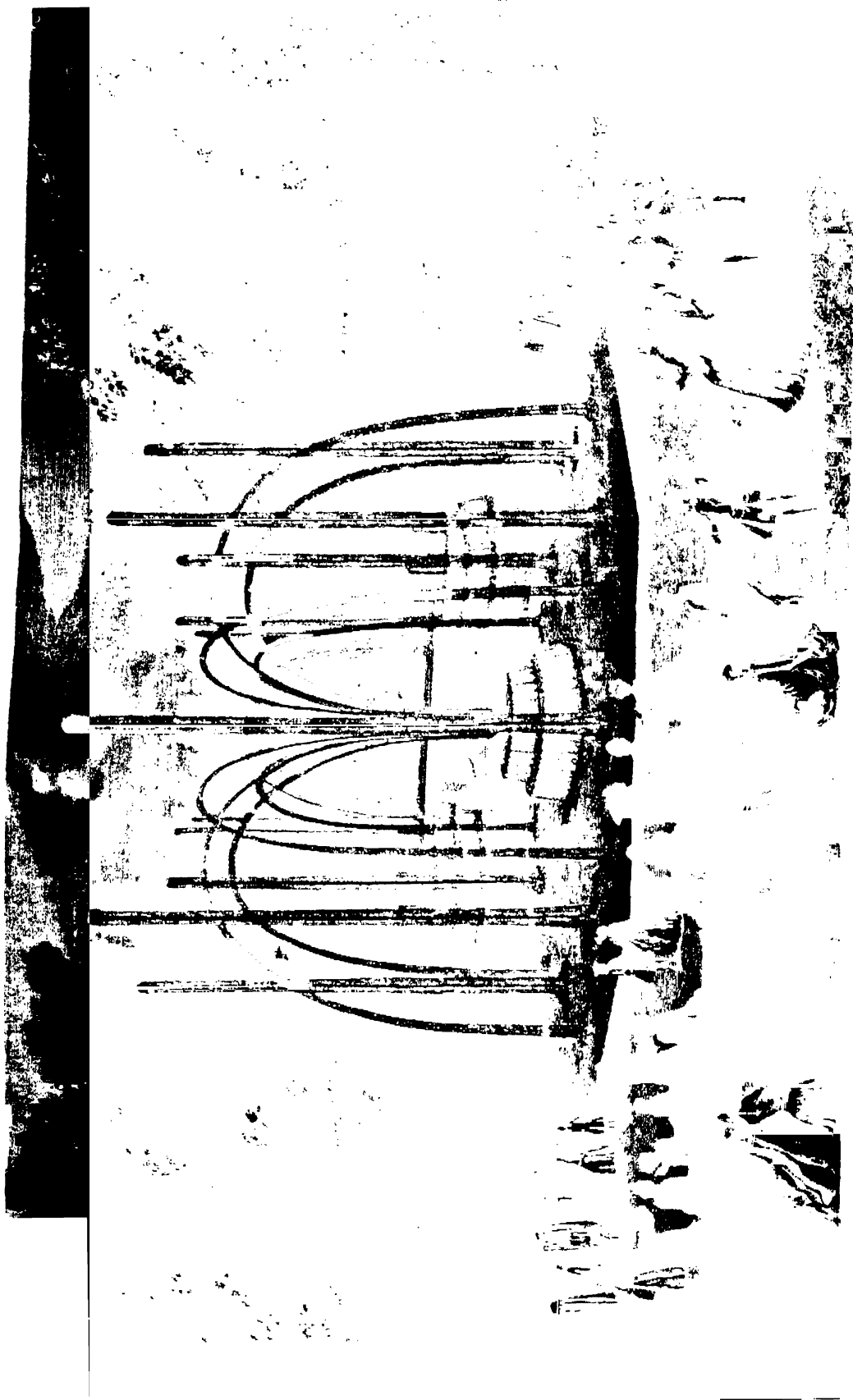


Versailles: The Water Theatre.

(Viewpoint 3 on plan.)

the gardens as they stand to-day began to appear in the forest around. Visits increased in number and duration until at last the place became almost his permanent home. With the increase of power and the consequent extension of the Court, his ambitions in regard to it expanded. In 1679, while Le Nôtre was carrying on steadily with the gardens, Hardouin Mansart was commissioned completely to transform Le Vau's little château, and to make it worthy of the greatest monarch in Christendom.

The gardens mark one of the highest epochs in pattern design. Except in the main levels, which could not be avoided, in the view towards the



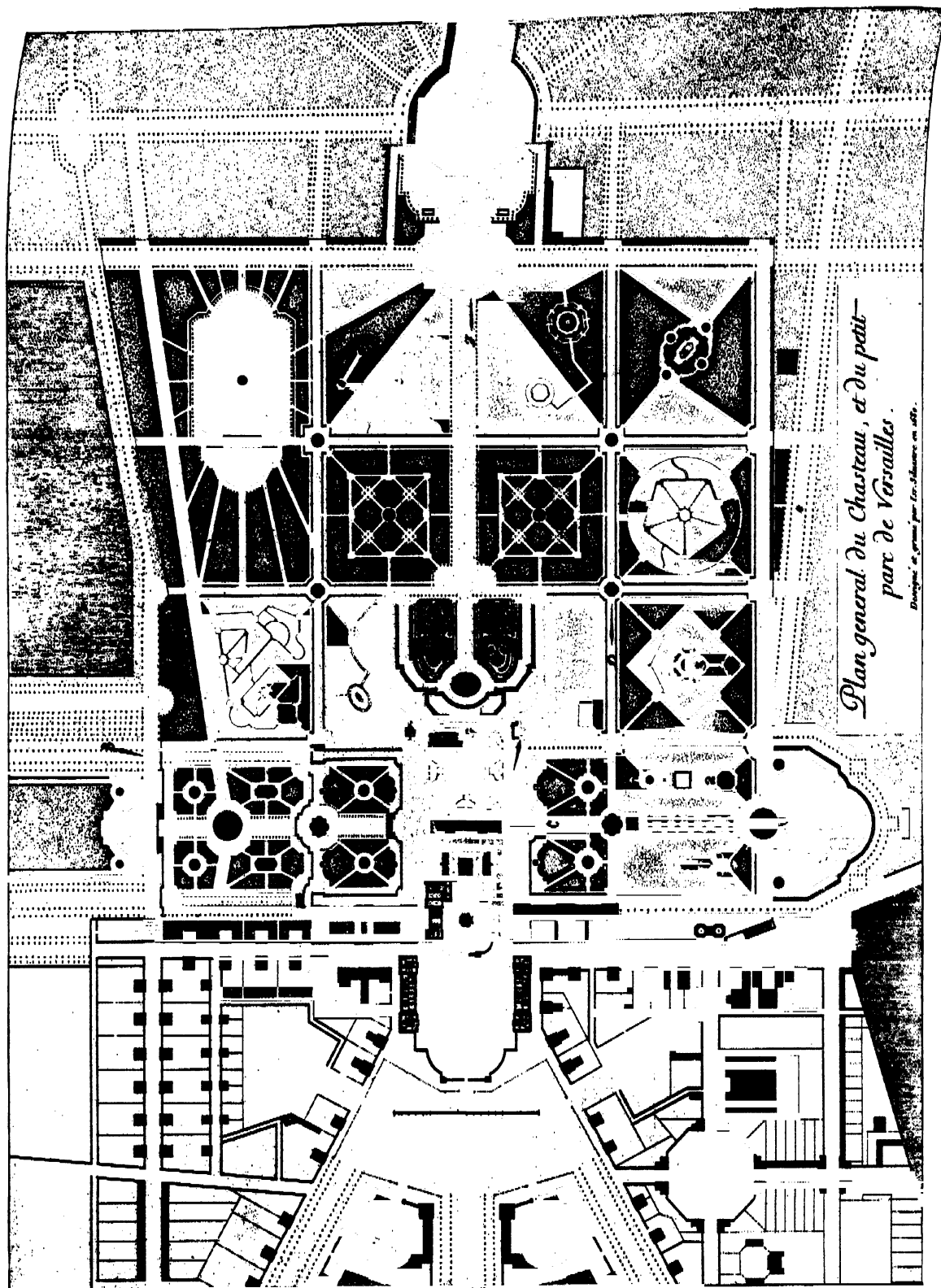
Versailles: Les Trois Fontaines.

(Viewpoint 2 on plan.)

LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

Satory Woods, and in the choice of trees, the lay-out has no relation to the country. The whole scheme might be a piece of embroidery, its end pinned to the ground by the radiating avenues of the *étoile*. Trees are marshalled in thousands, and count not as individuals but as masses. In mere size the gardens surpass anything of their kind in Europe. Scale, however, is independent of size, and the scale of French art of the period is essentially intimate and charming. This is emphasised at Versailles, where the scale of the Palace was set by Le Vau's refronting of the earlier building. Mansart's Galeries des Glaces and the two wings increase the frontage but not the scale. Spreading outwards from this façade, the scale of the parts of the gardens gradually increases until it reaches the huge element of the Grand Canal. By simplifying the distance the increasing scale adds to the drama of the central vista, round which the garden builds. Similarly the hundred steps and the Orangery widen out, more abruptly, to the view across the Swiss Lake. The gravelled walks, especially near the Palace, are sufficiently wide for coaches to pass comfortably, yet the vases and sculpture of these parts are scarcely more than life-size. Across the expanse of gravel they were intended to be connected one to another by people; without people, and especially those in the costumes of the period, the design is incomplete. Where an Italian garden with its greater scale and smaller size as a rule needs a single person, a French garden needs the vivacity of crowds.

The water parterre of the Palace with its twin pools and exquisite sculpture plants the glittering façade on the ground, while the raised position almost on a level with surrounding trees, gives a spaciousness far beyond its size. The water parterre troubled Le Nôtre and an earlier and more elaborate scheme was altered in favour of the present. Nothing could be finer than this introduction to the vista that emerges over its brim. Generations continue to be inspired by the view. Every moment it changes. Shadows travel up its length, emphasising plane after plane of trees. The Grand Canal lays a great length of sky upon the ground. On beyond, the ground runs up in grass, and the distant country is narrowed and framed by twin rows of poplars that appear as one. The handling of widths, materials, and levels is superb. Immediately below



Versailles: Plan of the Petit Parc in 1680.

(The Water Parterre and the Orangerie have not yet been altered, and the Circular Colonnade, Viewpoint E, has not been constructed.)

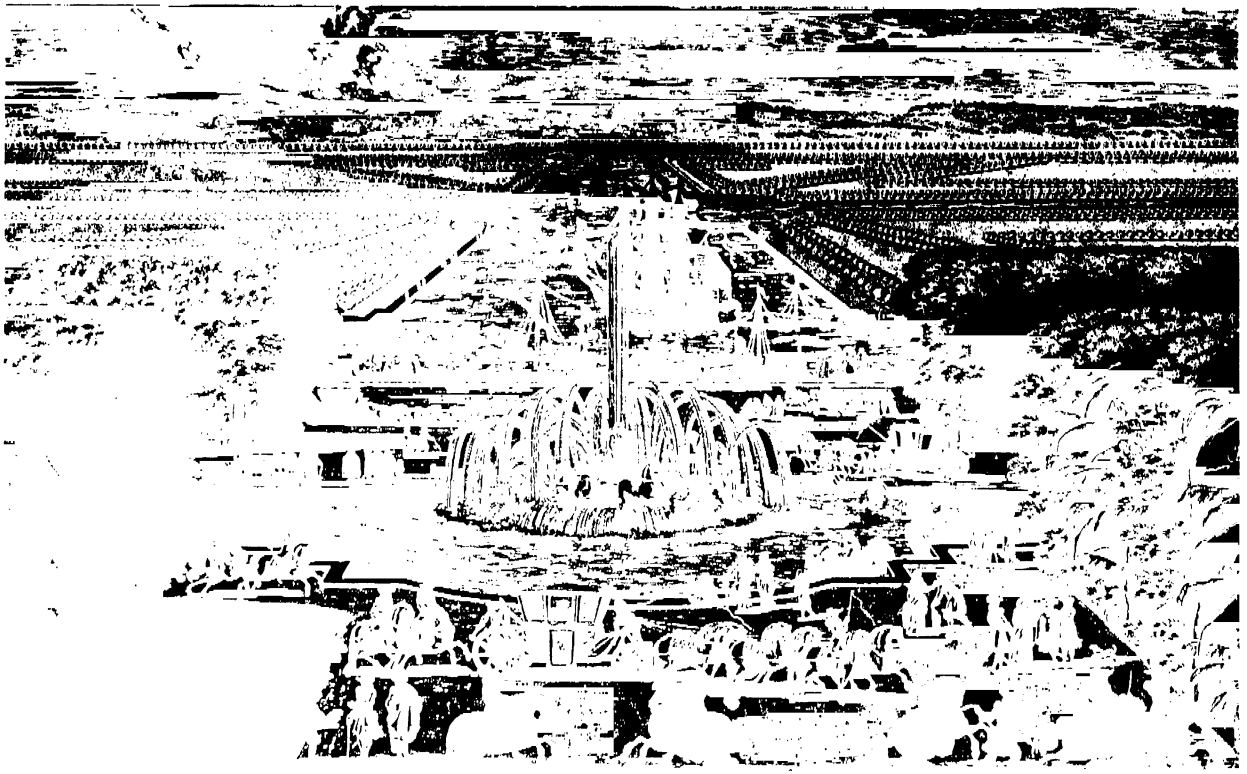
LE NÔTRE AT VERSAILLES

one lies the fountain of Latona, round which spread the lines of circulation. To-day the effect is altered by the yew-trees that have outgrown their size, the meagre parterre, and the untidiness of the surrounding trees. Once Louis XIV. mapped out a route to show the gardens to guests, and he would stand and admire the Palace from the south-west corner of the parterre, with people streaming down the stairs and ramps. On the right of the Palace the sloping parterre is enclosed except for the avenue leading to the fountain and basin of Neptune. This avenue is one of the most delightful features of the park. On the left, the axis crosses another parterre, wide open to the Satory Woods across the Swiss Lake. The elaborate parterre competes with the view, does not in any way reflect it, and both become an integral part of the garden only when one is seen without the other. Walks, as though carved out of the trees, were once lined with "charmilles," hedges of hornbeam grown on treillage. These averaged about twenty-five feet high, and in the early days entirely dominated the growing trees they enclosed. People rarely penetrated into the spaces between. The statues and hermæ that follow the walks stood out against the walls of green, whose firm line connected one to another. The white flecks of stone give the size to the parts and extend the Palace into the bosquets.

It seems that Le Brun and Le Nôtre together decided upon the position and type of sculpture, and the sculptor was then given free rein to his fancies. At the intersection of the cross walks in the bosquets, the sculpture in the circular basins is kept low not to interfere with the vistas, and is closely related to the immediate foliage. The sculpture here is scarcely less sophisticated than that by the palace; it gives an idea of the formality of planting that it does not appear out of place. Most of the gardens in the bosquets have disappeared, but there is one, the circular colonnade, that is in almost perfect condition. By itself, it is, perhaps, the most beautiful piece of architecture at Versailles. The materials are of the finest, and the slender marble columns echo the trees among which they stand. But the life of the gardens is water. To-day the fountains are still except for an hour or two on occasional Sundays, though the pools continue to mirror either their surroundings or the sky. It is the sky in the water that

GARDENS AND DESIGN

increases the sense of space on the terrace before the Palace. Flanking either side of the way down to the parterre of Latona are two small partially enclosed tanks, the water level only two or three feet below eye level. These are the contrast. In the bosquets the pools double the trees, increasing the height of avenues. So many fountains have gone that prints alone can recall them, or tell of the song of water that percolated everywhere. Giant spouts flung water into the air in masses. Tiny jets wove graceful patterns with their neighbours. The Dragon spouted in constant rage. Children of the woods for ever played in showers of rain. Though the water is silent, the bronzes and marbles are scarcely older than when Louis saw them. The trees are in their fourth generation, as fresh and young as ever. Over them hangs the spirit of perpetual youth, that deceived the Court in the passage of time. The Grand Canal seems alone to hold the history of the years: when the sunshine is playing upon the waters, or when the clouds roll up dark and threatening. Twilight finds it calm and thoughtful, brooding on the past.



Versailles: The Grand Canal in the Time of Louis XIV.

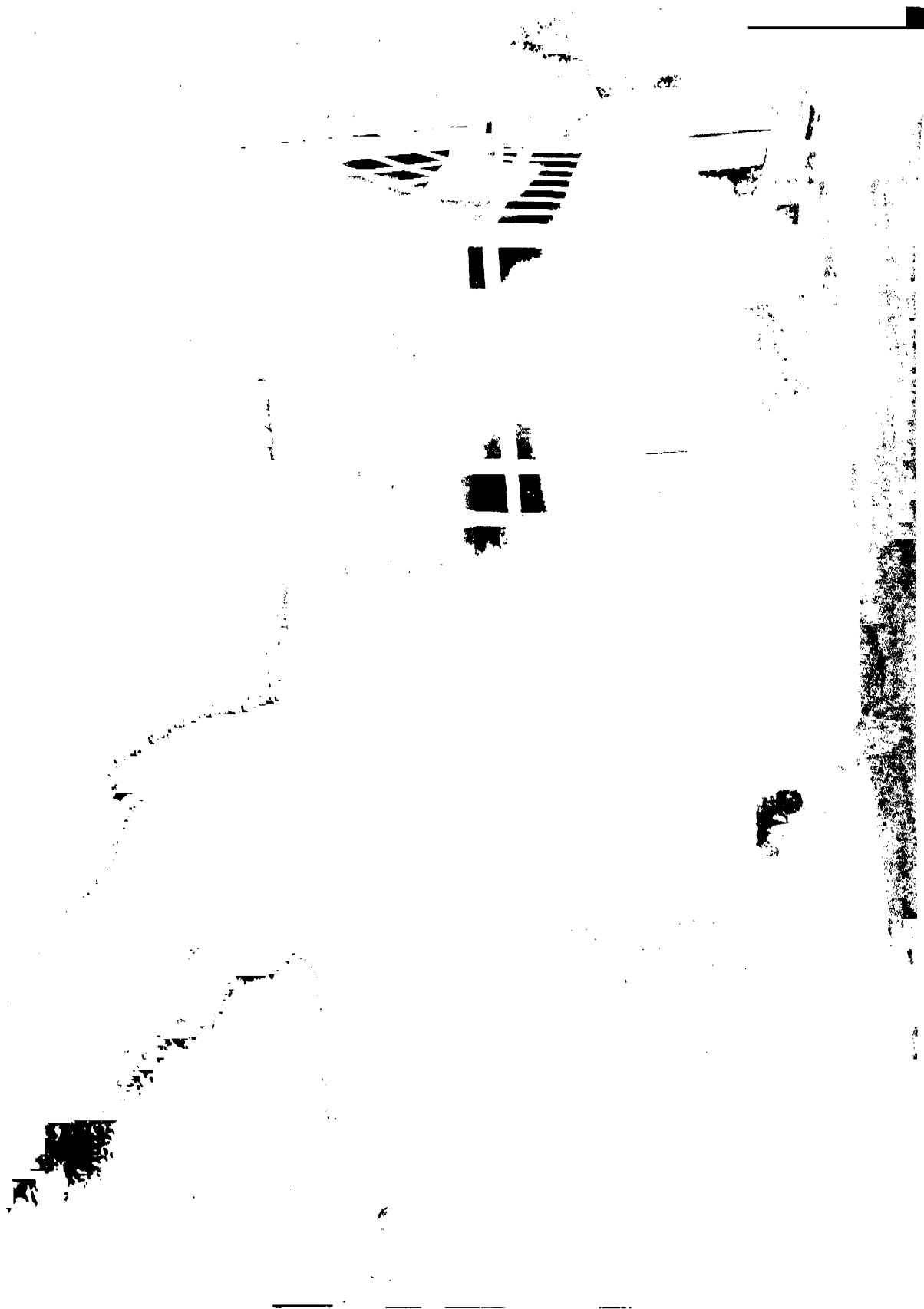


Owlpen Manor, Gloucestershire.

III THE ENGLISH TRADITION

HISTORY

ITALY found a great art expression during the Renaissance, France culminated under Louis XIV. In the history of England there seems to be no one period that can be definitely singled out and described as the summit of her artistic achievements. The history has been one chequered by foreign influences. The straight roads across Britain tell of the ruthless power of the first Romans, and such remains of villas suggest that these were in spirit but outposts of the Empire. The Normans found a nation more developed and better able to survive a new influence. Through the Middle Ages, though the Mother Church of Westminster Abbey was rebuilt under French influence, the country was steadily creating a tradition of art which culminated in domestic work in the sixteenth century. Probably it is from the time of Henry VIII. to Elizabeth, when the first uncertain indications of the Renaissance from Italy were being felt, that England was most independent. By the time of Charles I. the Italian influence was reaching its most marked period. Under Charles II. and the Restoration the close intercourse between France and England meant the introduction into this country of the pronounced ideas of Le Nôtre, and this continued, with a brief interlude under William and Mary, during and after the French wars in the reign of Queen Anne.



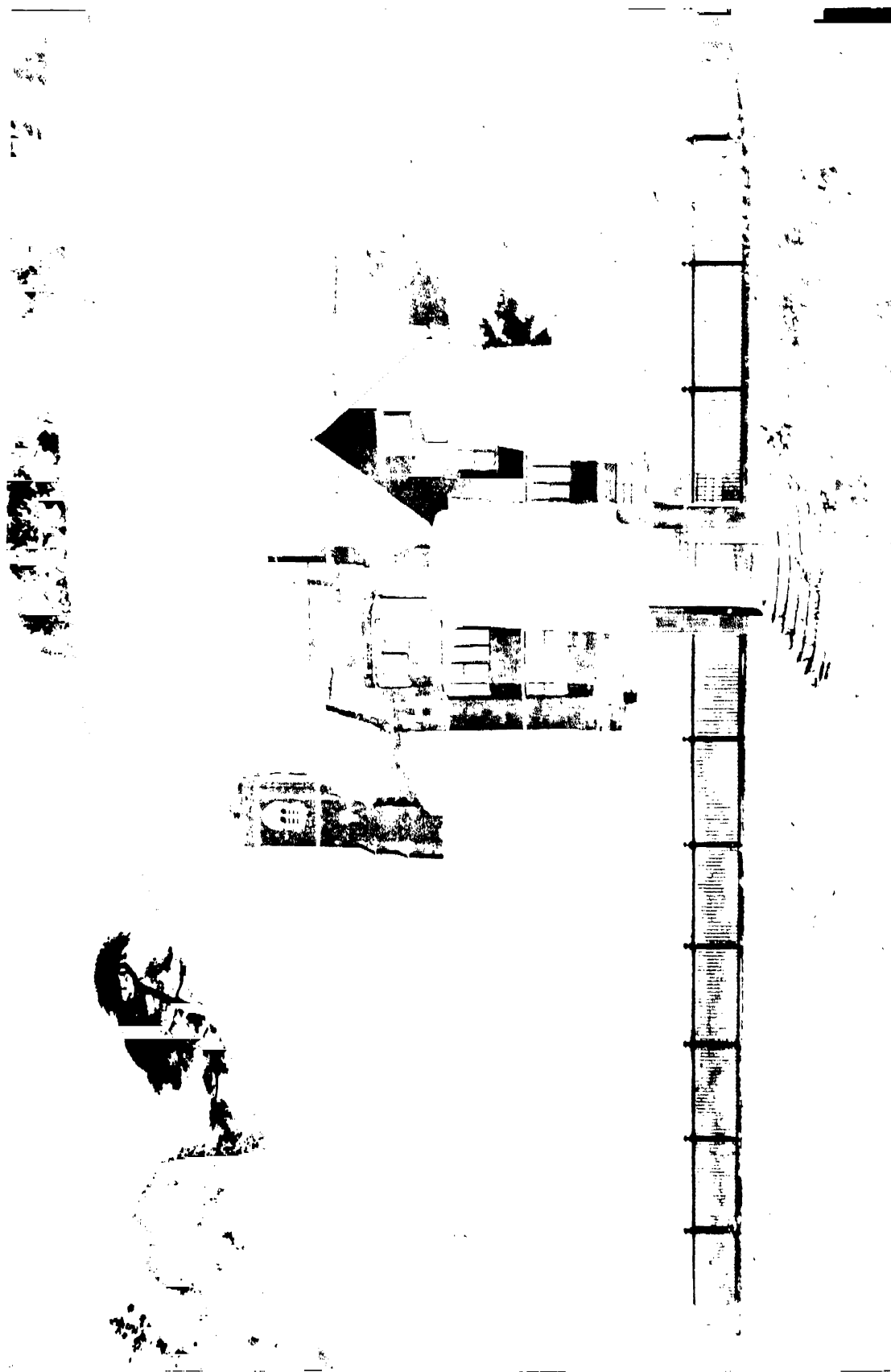
Eardisland, Herefordshire.

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

COUNTRY AND CLIMATE

If the history has been varied, to unroll the map of England is to see an equally varied landscape. Every county has its own characteristic. There are the flats of Norfolk and Suffolk contrasting with the Peak District of Derbyshire, the spirited outline of the Cleveland hills in Yorkshire with the more sober lines of the South Downs, the richly wooded agricultural land of Devonshire with the wildness of the adjoining moors. All over the country the scenery changes every few miles, and because for the most part buildings have been made from the most accessible materials, there is a constant change in their combination. Where the district has no stone (and the types of stone are innumerable) brickwork has been brought to a high pitch of design, as in the old mansions of Essex. The half-timbered houses of Cheshire and elsewhere suggest well-wooded arcas. In the fen districts materials were limited to what could be brought on horseback, for there were no good roads. Before the beginning of the eighteenth century every part of the country had its own crafts, often handed down from family to family, and architecture, filtering through slowly from the nearest centre of fashion, was considerably affected by local traditions; at the time of Henry VII., when the history of the English garden begins to take shape, craftsmanship in this country was in many ways unequalled in Europe. In considering all this variety of landscape and materials in England, there is one element that appears not only to weld everything together, but to be so strong an influence in itself that it may have controlled the whole course of English garden design. The hedges and fields that chequer the country before ever a garden is made cast over the land a certain degree of formality. In time the garden grew to fill the spaces, and at last it broke the lines and swept them away from its path, as though a hindrance rather than an inspiration.

Climate has been another influence. It is a sombre country, more winter than summer, and because of this the relation of house to garden has altered considerably from time to time. At first there are massive walls and tiny windows to keep out the cold, directly opposed to a similar proportion in Italy,

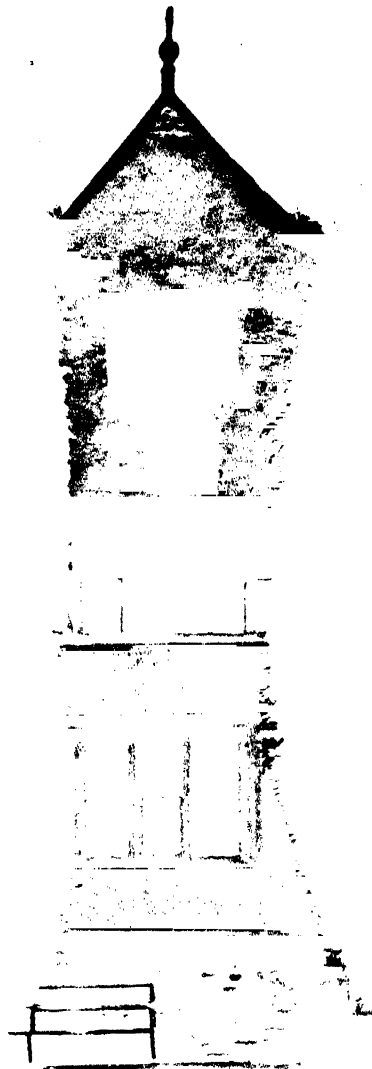


Owlpen Manor, Gloucestershire.
(Viewpoint A on plan.)

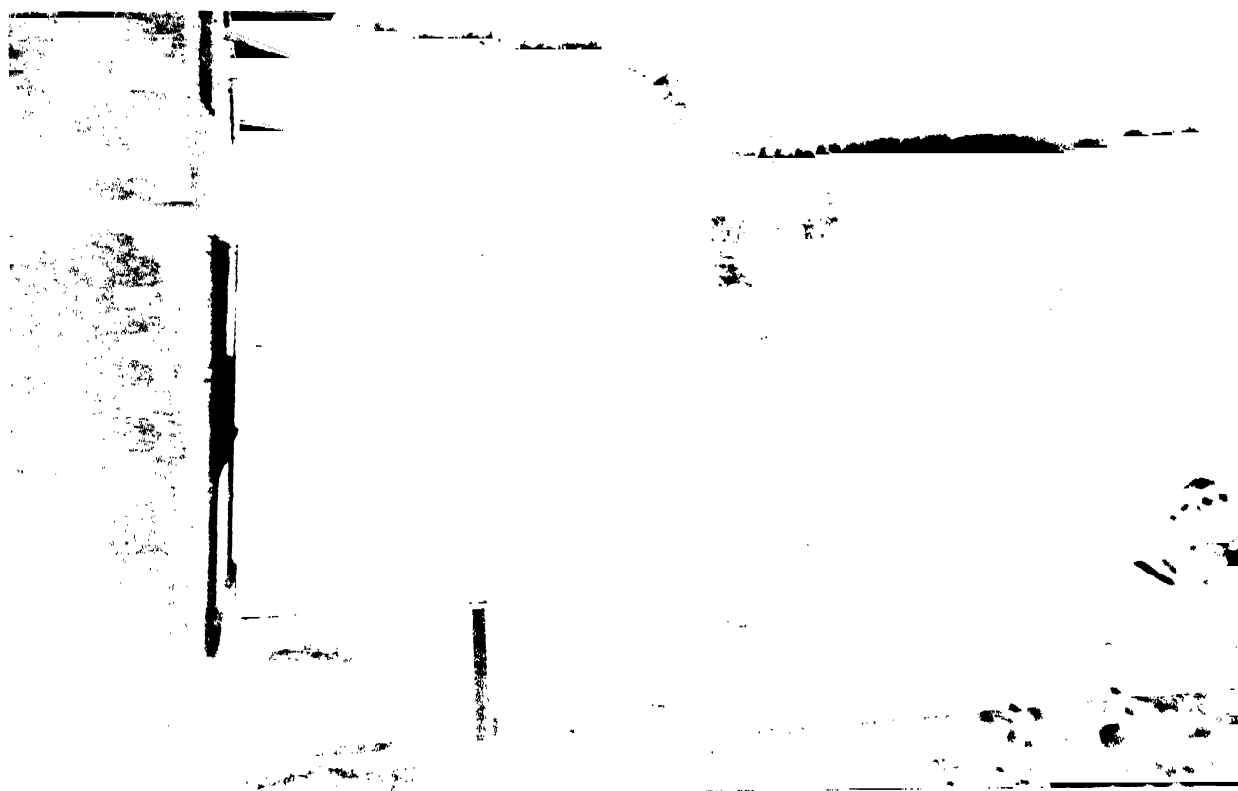
THE ENGLISH TRADITION

so arranged to keep out the heat. As time goes on the windows grow wider, and there are separate fireplaces for each room (made possible by the more extended use of coal) as though the thought of sun and air grows more important. Climate controlled the choice of site, for one too low is associated with damp, and one on the top of a hill too exposed. As a rule there was protection from north and east. It is interesting to follow how the mediæval moated house left its low-lying ground and in the course of time moved slowly up the hill. The climate, if it is sombre, is also equable, and allows a rich vegetation. English trees are a part of every landscape, every village, and every house and garden. Oaks and elms, beeches, limes, and chestnuts, to-day grow into more splendid groups and in greater masses here than anywhere else. With trees is coupled turf, for although turf is found abroad even so far south as Italy, it is probably only in England that there exists such rich and everlasting grass, grass that with a little care can be cultured into a carpet more perfect than was ever made by hand. As if in natural contrast to the turf, there are flowers, and here again England has at her disposal a heritage that is open to all.

With all this varied beauty of landscape and materials, it is not surprising that the old English garden has round it a glamour. Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the Englishman that unknowingly has allowed the material to triumph, casting over them all an ingenuousness that is sometimes both so noble and disarming. There is none of that profound thought that enabled the Italian to succeed in spite of his materials, and there is little suggestion of the magnificent sophistication of Le Nôtre. If the Englishman has tried frankly to copy either one or the other, he has almost invariably failed, and the garden, if it is fine, is so in spite of his efforts. The technique behind the English plan is as a rule elementary, and this accounts for the lack of unity in our own gardens in comparison with the work of other countries. One presumes the designer may have studied the plan only on the site, and was thus unable to grasp the whole.



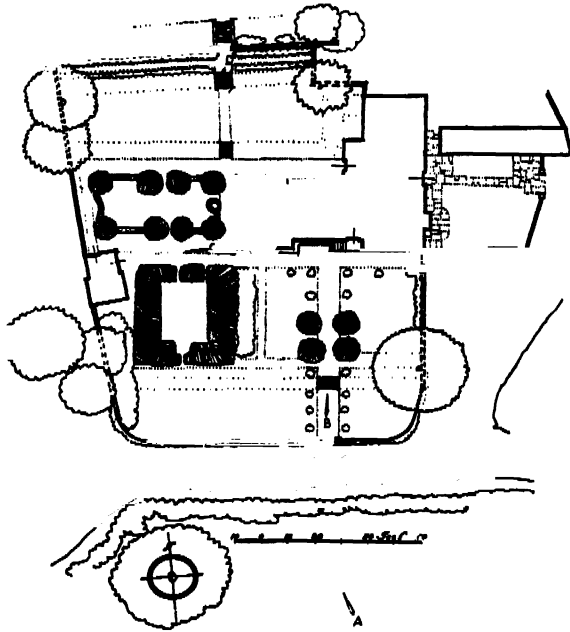
Owlpen Manor.
(Viewpoint B on plan)



Owlpen Manor.

Above : Viewpoint C on plan. Below : Viewpoint D on Plan.

Looking back into the past, one sees how the design of the garden grows out of the Middle Ages, for the thirteenth century in its own way was intellectually England's greatest period. The philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas and the conception of the west front of Wells Cathedral mean thought as profound as any in the world's history. Dating from then, the power of the Church echoes down the ages, with all its mysticism, idealism and narrow ways, superstition



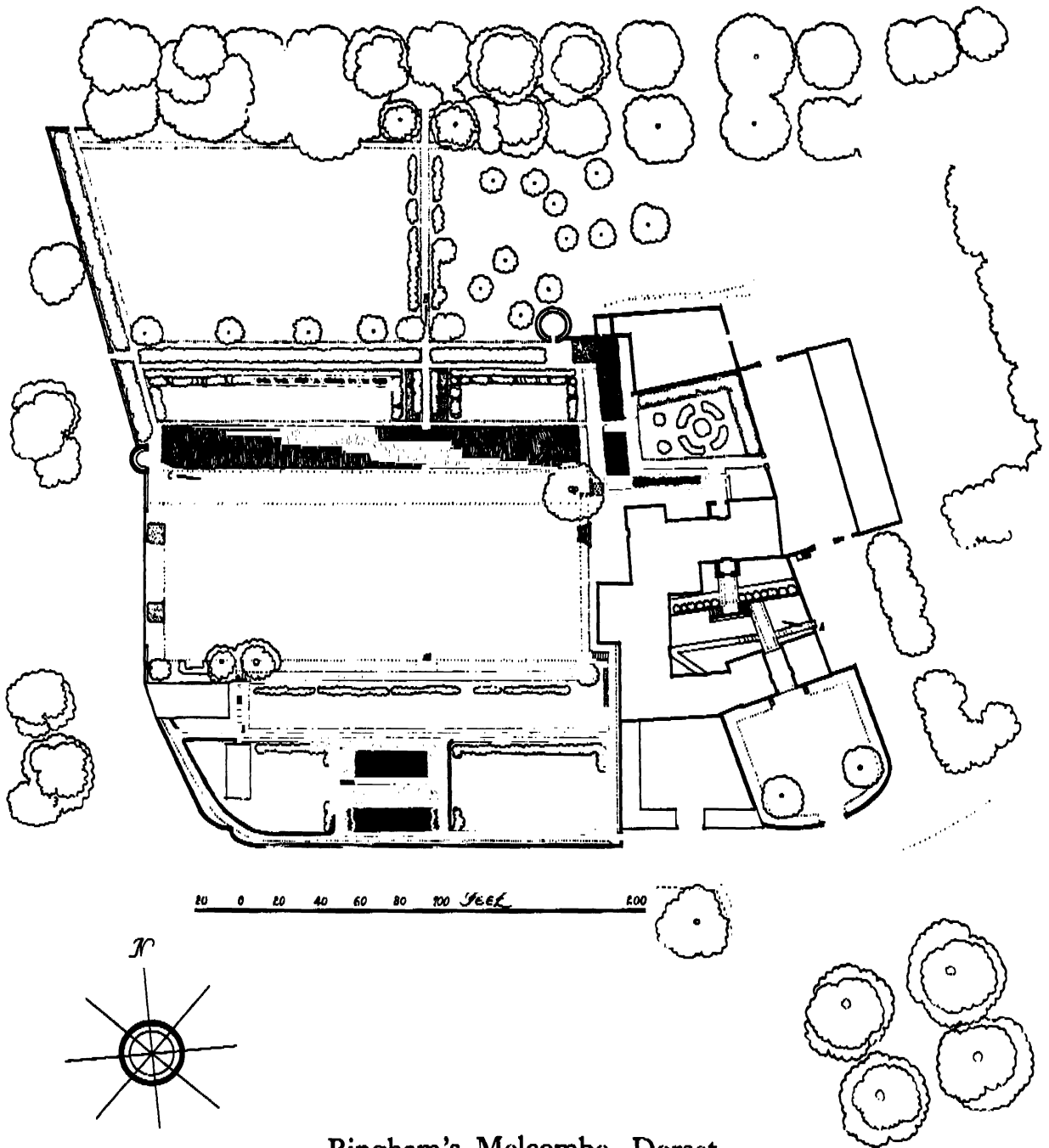
Owlpen Manor.

and personal discomfort. By the reign of Henry VII. its power had so far declined that in conjunction with other influences, such as the invention of gunpowder that rendered obsolete the fortified castle, houses here and there began to rise having round them a garden not enclosed by the high walls of the monastery garden, and containing more freedom than those simple squares suggested. It is significant that although the mediæval man shut out nature, he was himself more akin to it than in those later days when terraces were built up at enormous cost to survey the landscape as though it were some

strange spectacle. On emerging from castle or monastery, itself usually placed in a romantic setting, he unconsciously built a house and garden possibly more related than at any other time to the countryside.

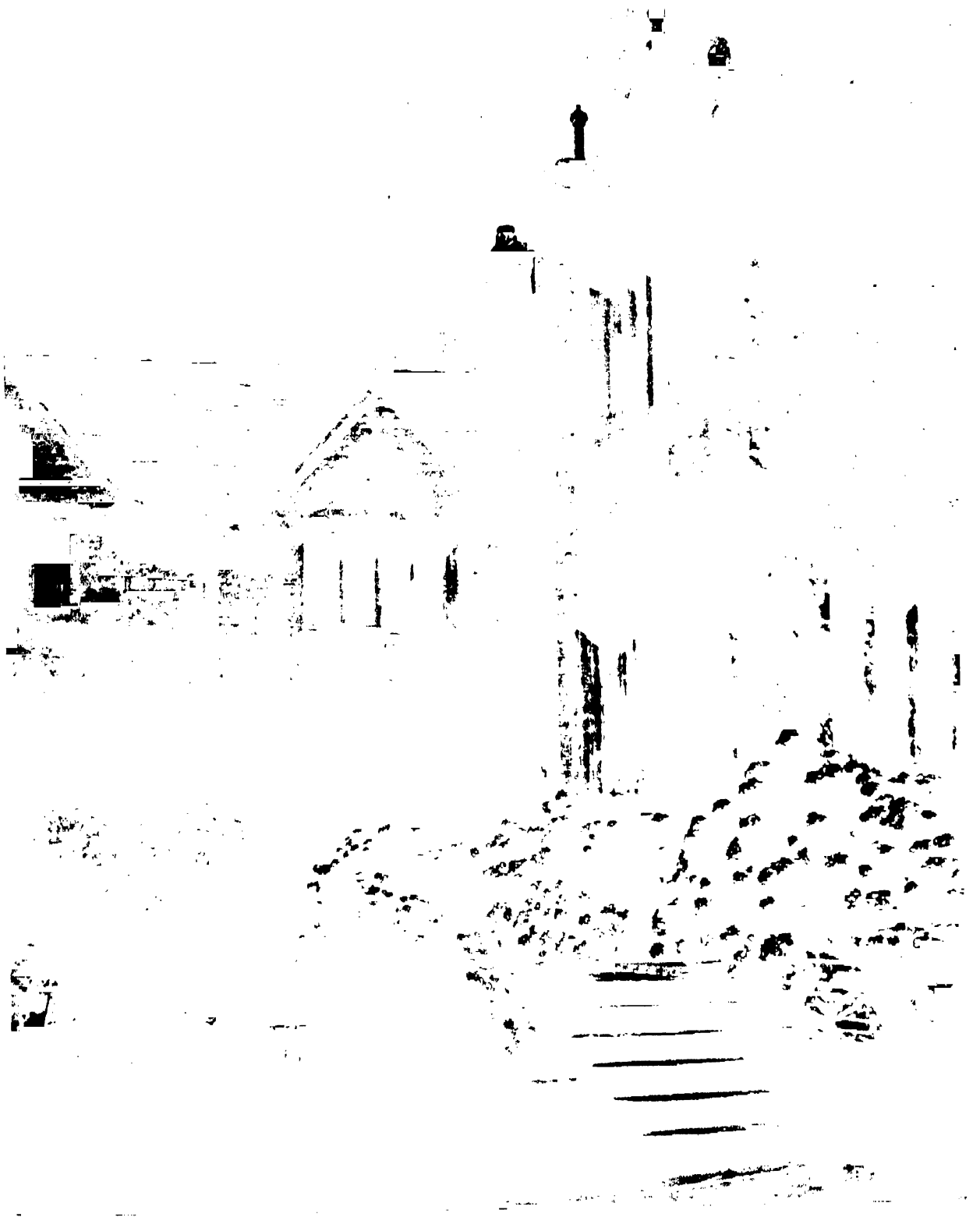
It is in the heart of Gloucestershire, set remotely away in a deep valley of the hills, that perhaps the earliest complete garden is found—Owlpen Manor. No definite date is recorded, but the house goes back to the thirteenth century, was considerably altered under Elizabeth, and again about 1616. At the back of the little group that comprises church and manor, a hill looms dark and tremendous.

THE ENGLISH TRADITION



Bingham's Melcombe, Dorset.

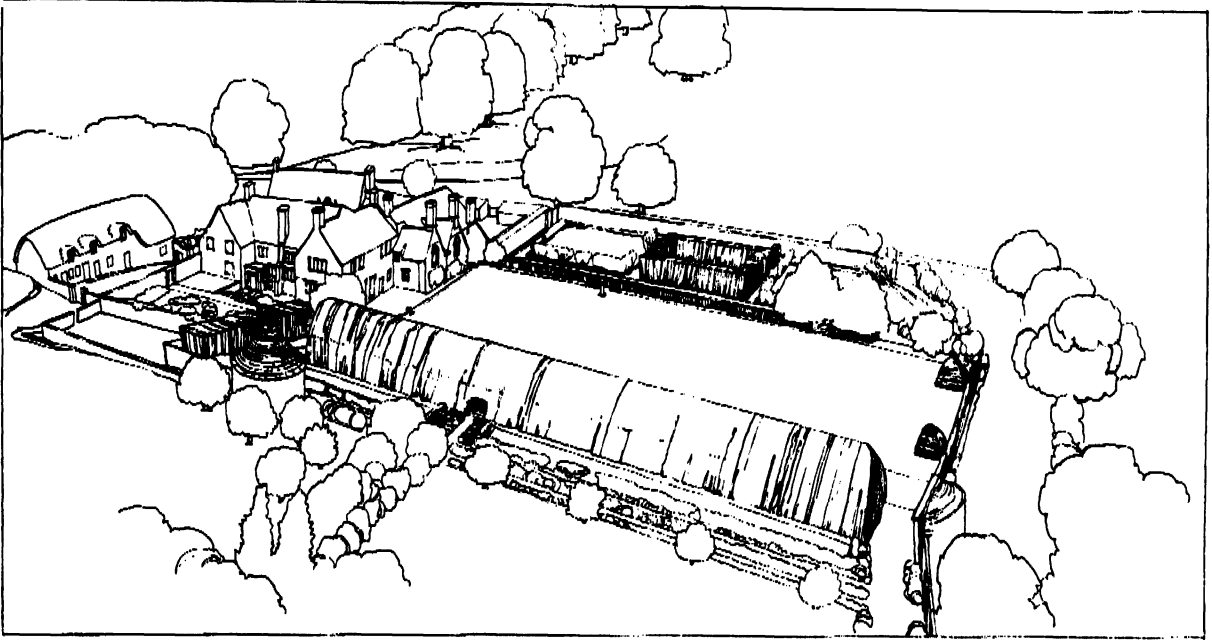
In front the ground rises less abruptly to another, and on either side more wood-crowned hills gather round the valley. The scheme is scarcely more than half an acre. To-day the yews are far beyond the size originally intended, but they cast over the place a gloom and mystery consonant with the superstition of the Middle Ages. Between their cliffs, more important as a mass than the house



Bingham's Melcombe, Dorset.

(Viewpoint A on plan.)

THE ENGLISH TRADITION



Bingham's Melcombe, Dorset.

itself, the ways seem puny and small. The yew parlour is a place where witches brew up mischief. Everything is cramped and narrow. The steps from terrace to terrace are steep and difficult, and there is little personal comfort to be derived from walking about. Over the little garden the church is ever present, symbolic of the power it once held over the souls of the people who lived below; and over the group, let into the garden by glimpses between the yew, hang the ponderous hills more lasting than anything. As a design the garden at Owlpen is admirably planned for its position. For so small an area there is intense interest, and with it all the scale is fine. The main terrace of yews carries the house on to the now almost completely hidden garden house, and it is round this group that the scheme is built; the parlour was never meant to have the importance it has to-day. If the place is too overwhelming for its size, it suggests how strong is the power of garden magic to transport one back over the centuries.

Owlpen Manor is the last of mediævalism and the first of individualism. History advanced, and probably about the time when Henry VIII. was renouncing the papacy, the garden at Bingham's Melcombe in Dorset was laid out for an



Bingham's Melcombe, Dorset.

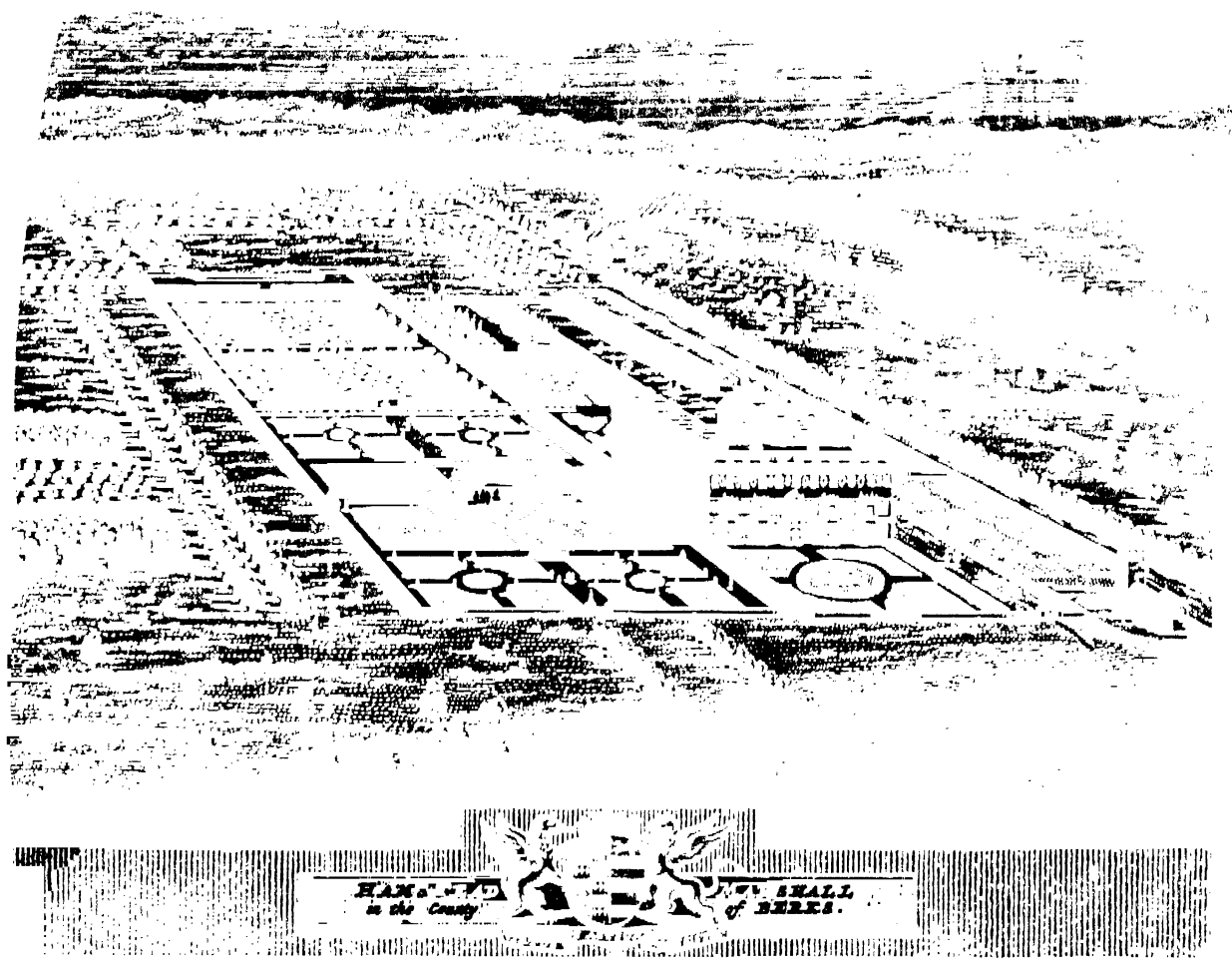
(Viewpoint B on plan.)



Bingham's Melcombe, Dorset.

Above : Viewpoint C on plan. Below : From the meadow.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

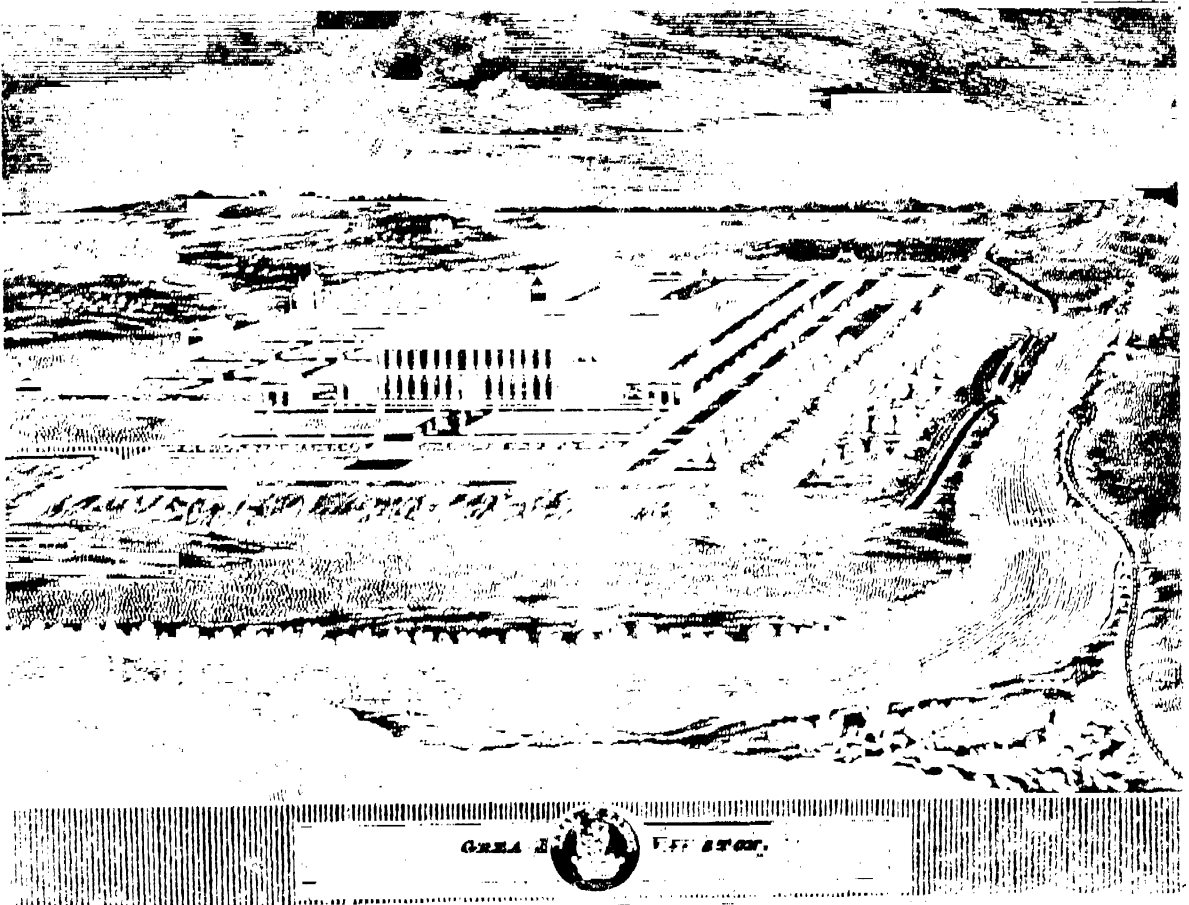


Hamstead Marshall, Berkshire.

older building. The crampedness of the Middle Ages has almost gone, but the unconscious relation to its surroundings remains in the fine if unsophisticated lines of the garden. The group is again situated remotely among hills, but the hills are farther away and lower, ringing themselves round the buildings in a partial amphitheatre. A wide valley leads in the opposite direction. The church is away among trees, out of sight of the garden. Though one of the earliest examples of a collection of gardens of more than one type, the real strength of the scheme lies in the breadth of the garden with its slender contrasting axis and its suitability to a haphazard house. The approach leads down the remains of a fine avenue, through a thirteenth-century ghost-haunted gatehouse, and into a courtyard full of odd angles and shapes, one side open over a low parapet

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

wall, and in their season hydrangeas on the little terrace throwing over all a glow of colour. Under the porch containing the powder closet one goes through the hall into what is known as the ladies' garden, a small walled enclosure where flowers grow in quiet seclusion before the windows. From here a sunk path skirts the buildings to the west front, where the new garden passing down the gentle slope to the south pauses before the house in the bowling green. To the right a bank supports a colossal yew hedge, in front there would have been a framed view up the valley, and to the left, where the ground drops more steeply to a lower terrace containing the kitchen garden, a broad calm meadow continues up to trees and the hills beyond. Lawn and hedge slumber through the years. From this spaciousness a little path leads through the yew hedge (so



Great Ribston.



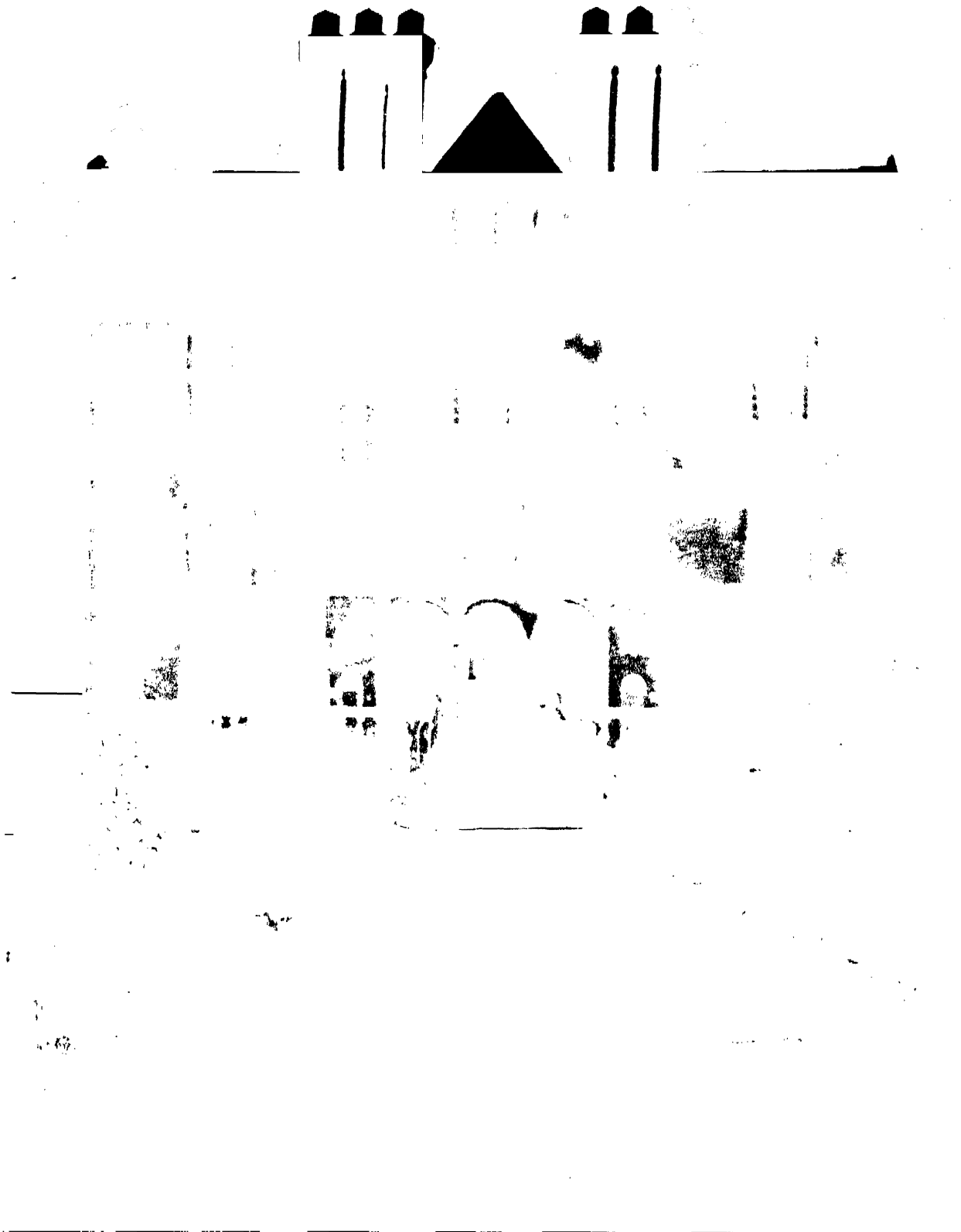
Cleeve Prior, Evesham.
The Twelve Apostles.

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

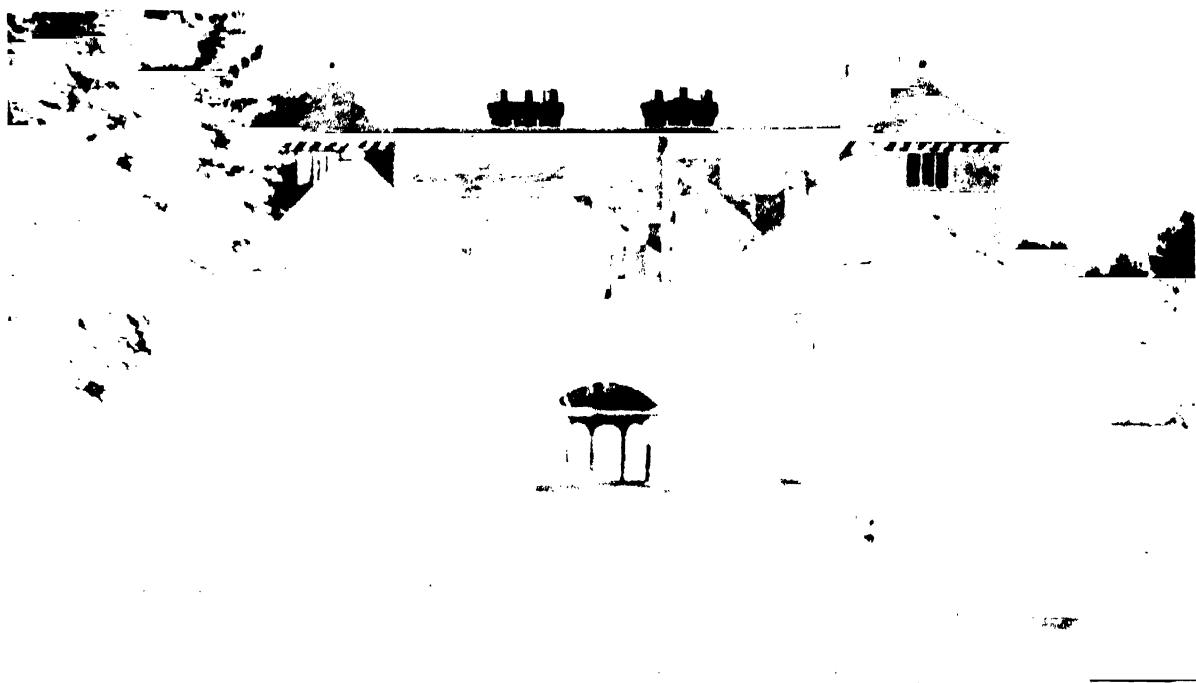
old that the trunks and branches inside form a vast impenetrable network, so huge that it has encroached upon and enveloped a terrace that once ran along the bank parallel to the lawn), and thence into a flower and fruit garden, shadowed and protected by the mighty hedge on one side, and partially enclosed by walls or hedges or fruit trees on the others. The paths are admirably arranged to visit the flowers intimately, and at the same time preserve the scale of the rest in the simplicity of their lines. Near one end is that favourite device of the period, a circular dovecot, and in those days the cooing of doves was heard perpetually. Our little path, crossing the flower walk, passes up through the orchard and into a great wooded avenue from which the garden down the hill seems to have started. Along the avenue, to-day leading from nowhere to nowhere in particular, one reaches, almost in the depths of a wood, a little fishpond, where the stream that feeds it comes fresh out of the trees.

1550-1625

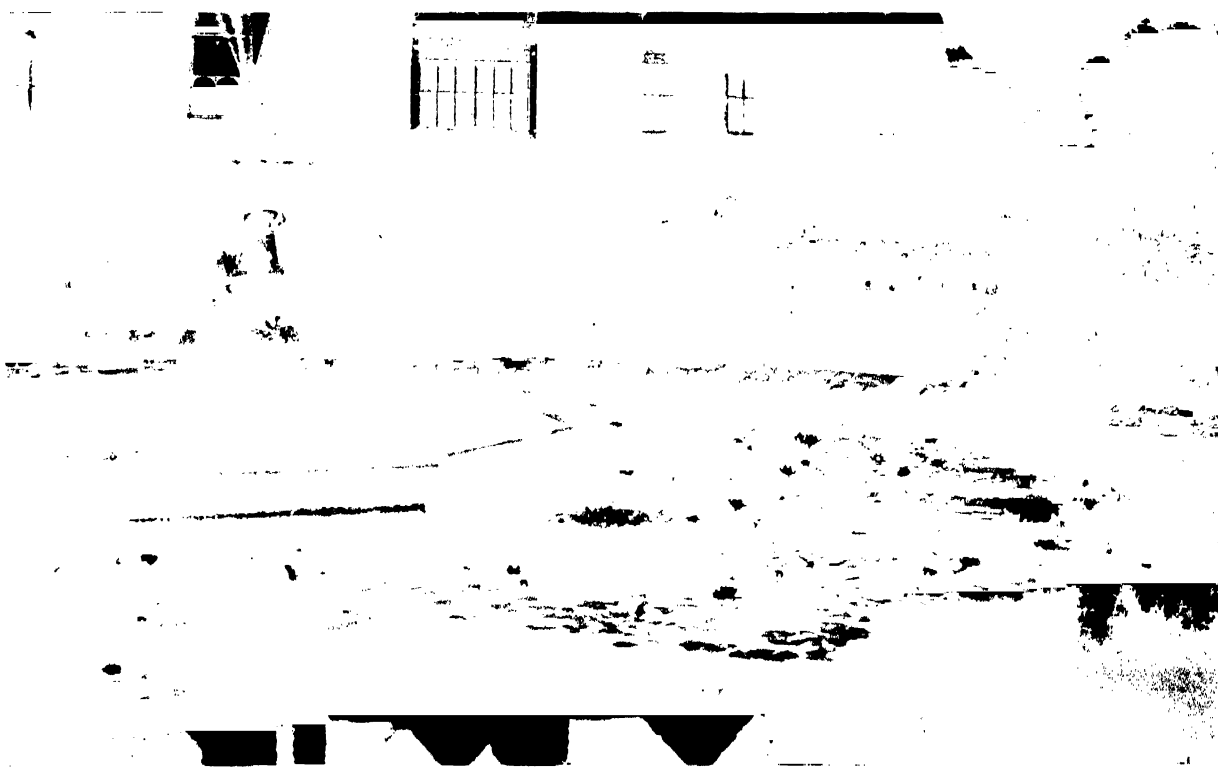
Meanwhile the suppression of the monasteries supplied vast wealth to the king and nobles, and was a direct cause of the private building that now began to take place all over the country. One supposes that the meeting of Henry VIII. and Francis I. on the Field of the Cloth of Gold gave this country the most stimulating impetus to the consideration of personal comfort that it had ever received. Other causes were at work to further the same movement that, as the Renaissance, had been taking place in Italy for over a hundred years. The Wars of the Roses had denuded the land of the flower of mediæval nobility, and the younger men who took their place were more susceptible to new influences. The rounding of the Horn quickly followed the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and so opened up trade and circulation in the northern countries in favour of those along the Mediterranean. Caxton introduced printing, and it was about this time that the individual began to travel abroad. The king himself gathered round him a few Italian craftsmen, building Nonsuch Palace, not a trace of which now remains. Wolsey rebuilt Hampton Court with its still enclosed



Cranborne Manor, Dorset.



Above : Poxwell, Dorset.
Below : Cranborne Manor, Dorset.
Gatehouses.



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

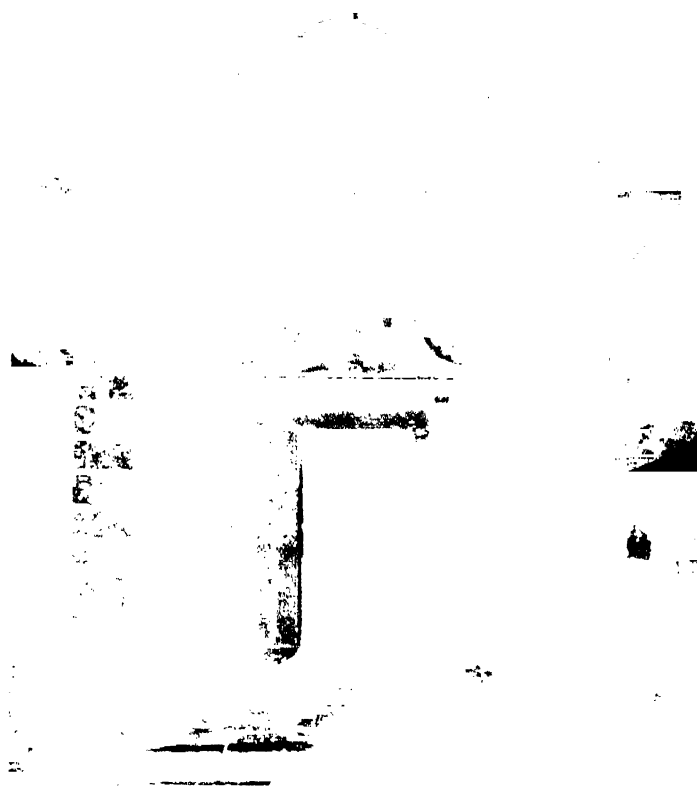
Above : Montacute, Somerset.

Below : The Flower Garden at Hatfield House.

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

gardens, and among others Layer Marney Towers in Essex, and Sutton Place in Surrey (page 41), were great houses, probably with simple gardens, that carry us through the short reign of Edward VI., the turbulent days of Mary, to the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Reviewing England's position politically and intellectually in those days, it is not surprising that her mansions were as fine in their own way as any contemporary building throughout Europe. The spirit of adventure and the command of the high seas led to the formation of colonies from which accrued wealth and power. In literature and drama a greater collection of names has rarely been gathered together. In architecture and the plastic arts it was a time when the tradition of cathedral building combined with the freshness of the day to absorb and make use of any ideas that might filter through from Italy. Unlike the châteaux of the Loire, there is nothing fanciful about an Elizabethan mansion. It is eminently logical, with an appreciation of mass and form, of planes and shadows that stand out boldly in this atmosphere where the clear-out shadows under the cornices and mouldings of a classic building exist only for a few days of the year. The architect, as an individual, now began to come into prominence, for with one or two notable exceptions all mediæval work was done by the community, and the name of the artist rarely appeared. It was a period, too, when the English country gentleman was often sufficiently educated in the arts to undertake, like Lord Salisbury at Hatfield, the design of his own house and gardens. Nor seldom have these places the touch of an amateur, though it is true that more than one house dating from this period depends on age for any beauty it may have. Elizabeth herself must have given great impetus to garden design. She loved the dignity of an avenue, and she loved to visit the country seats of the nobles. A Royal Progress in those days was an affair of importance, and one learns with wonder how a mighty vista was cut in the night at one house at which she rested. Open-air pageants, and entertainments that were often held in the gardens, all helped to give thoughtful consideration to the lay-out. Francis Bacon has described the ideal garden of the period according to his own lights, but, reading between

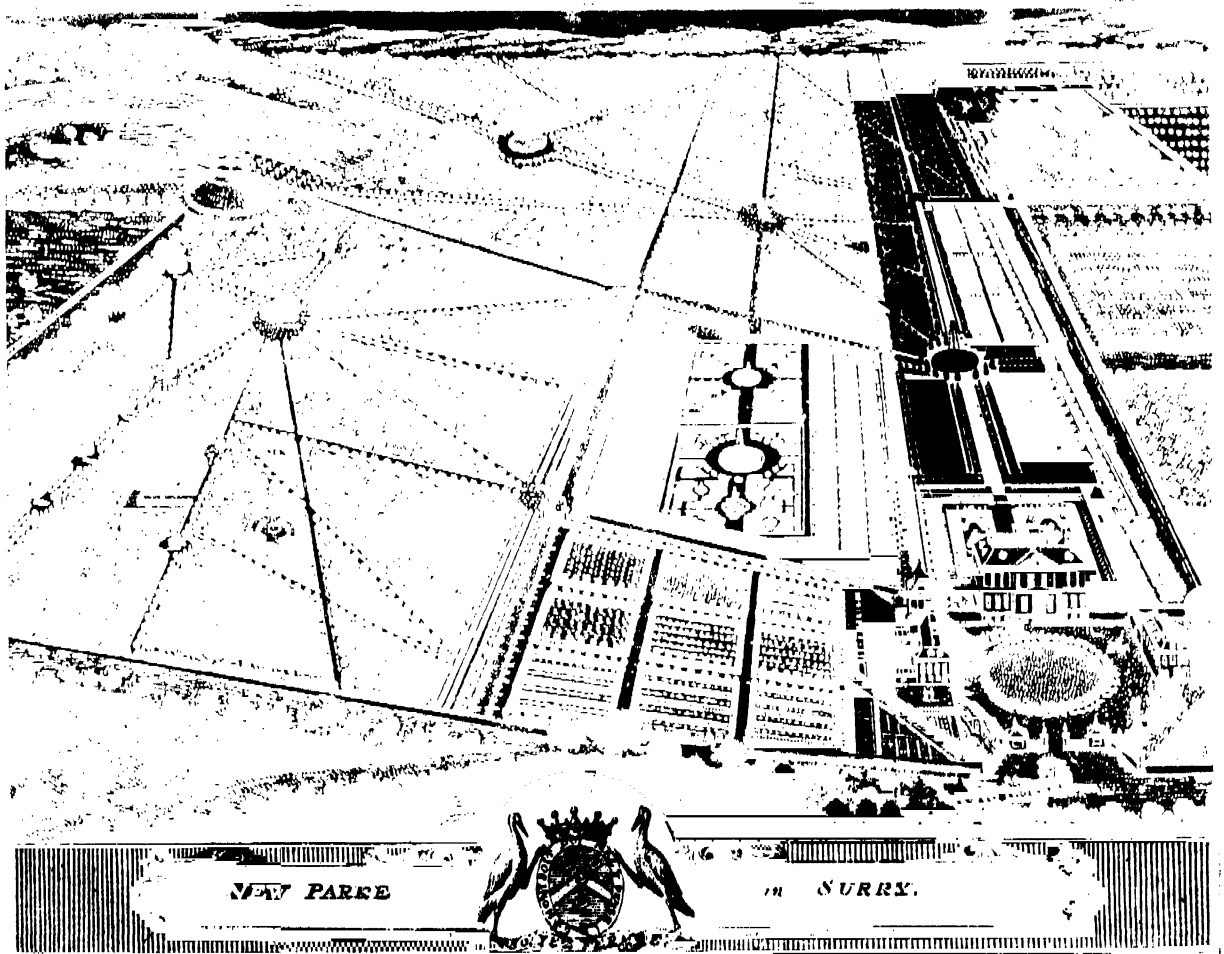


Above : Garden House at Beckington, Somerset.

Below : Charlton Horethorne, Dorset.

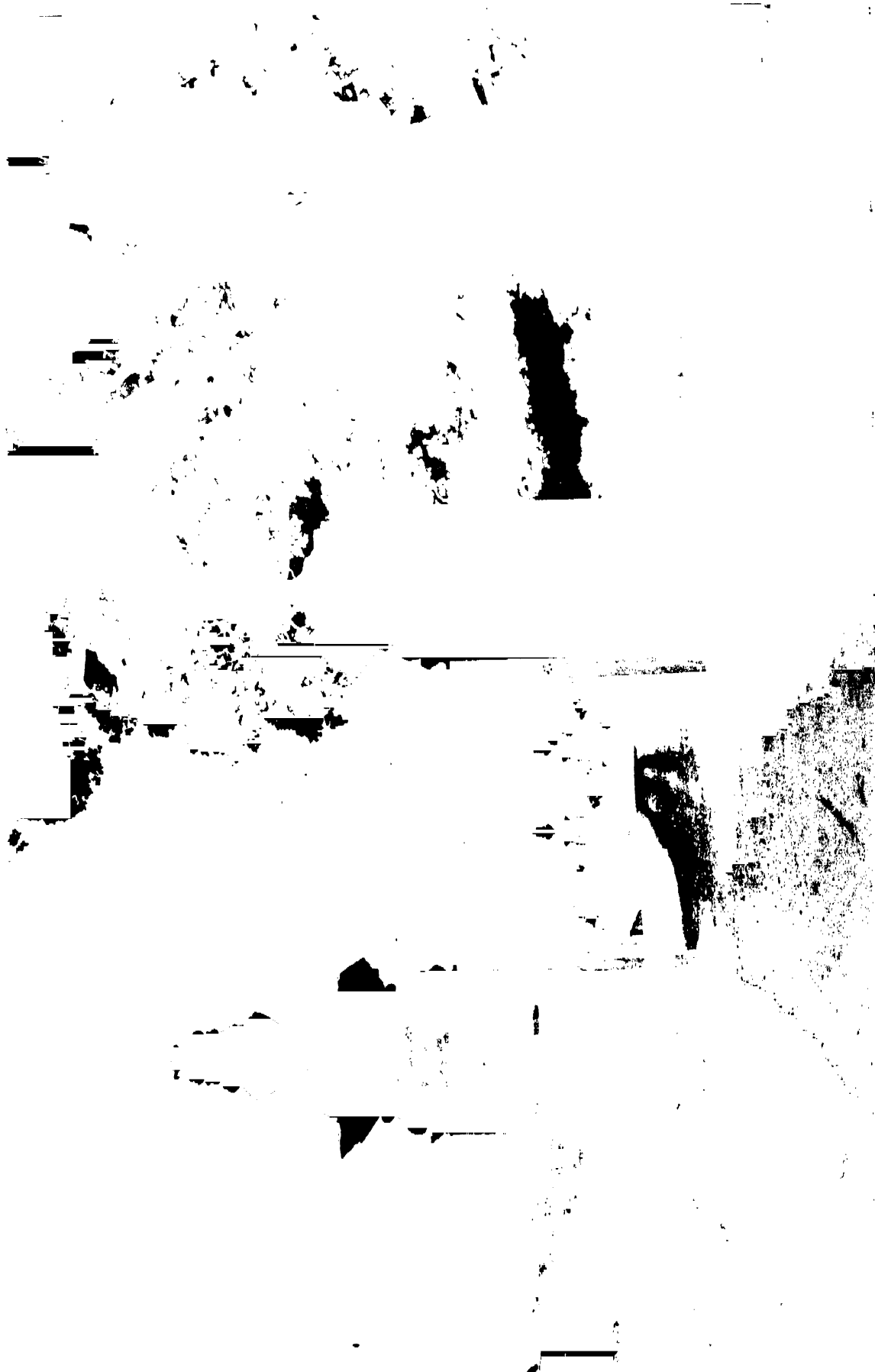
THE ENGLISH TRADITION

the lines, posterity learns little more than that the garden was profoundly appreciated from the point of view of design, and that the English garden of that date might be getting stereotyped, if it were not for the minor interests it contained. No longer was the country the direct inspiration of the scheme, nor was the interest as yet held by the artificial design of the Renaissance; there



New Park, Surrey.

was probably a more varied spirit in the smaller manor houses and cottages that sprinkled the countryside, rich in individuality. The typical garden of an Elizabethan mansion was first a definite base to the house, and nothing could be finer than the steady sweep of grass that often lay before the buildings. The rectangular compartments of the garden carried on the bluntness of the building, and in these compartments were preserved the choice things. There

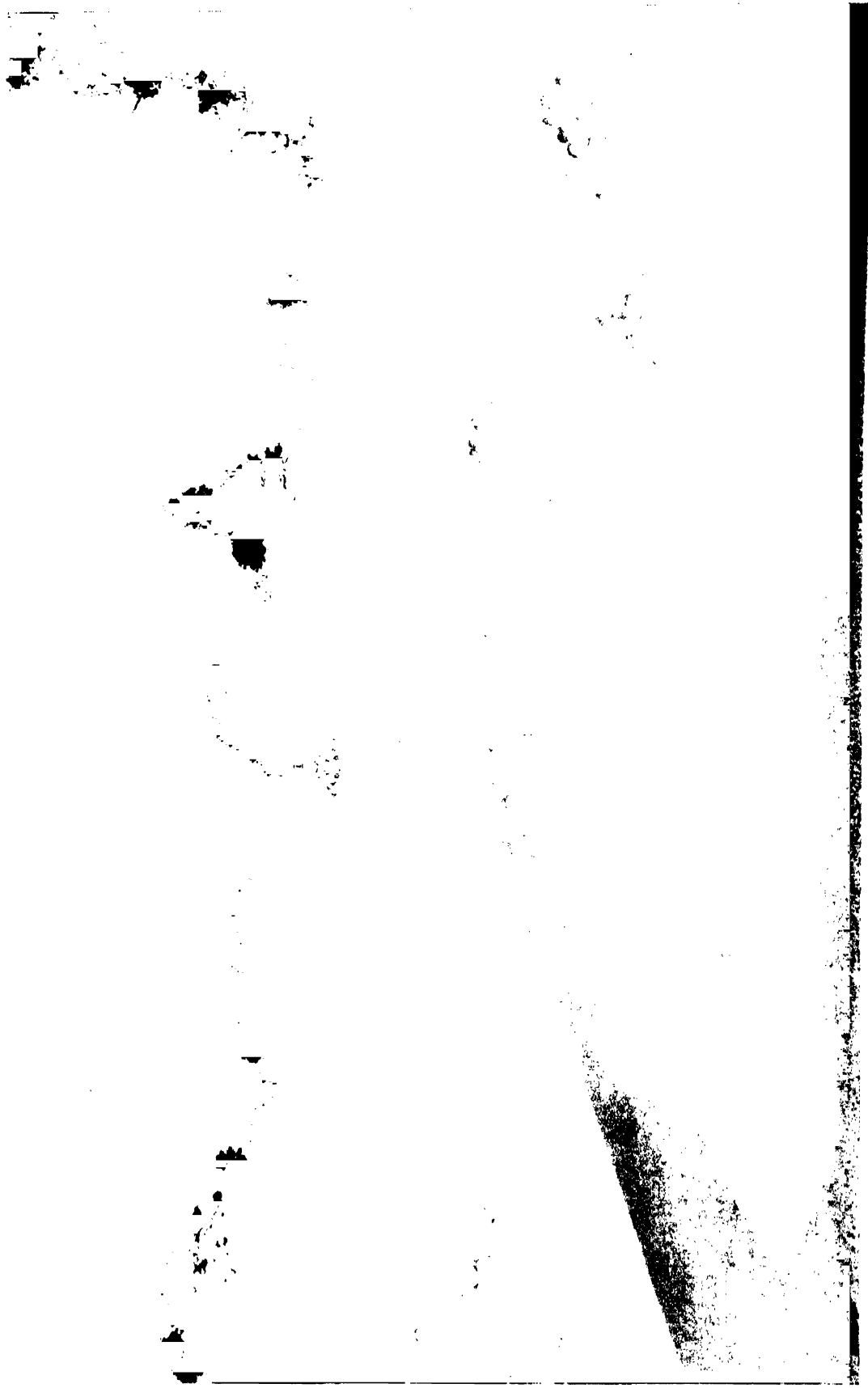


Hamstead Marshall, Berkshire.

See also print (page 160).



The Canal at Hampton Court.

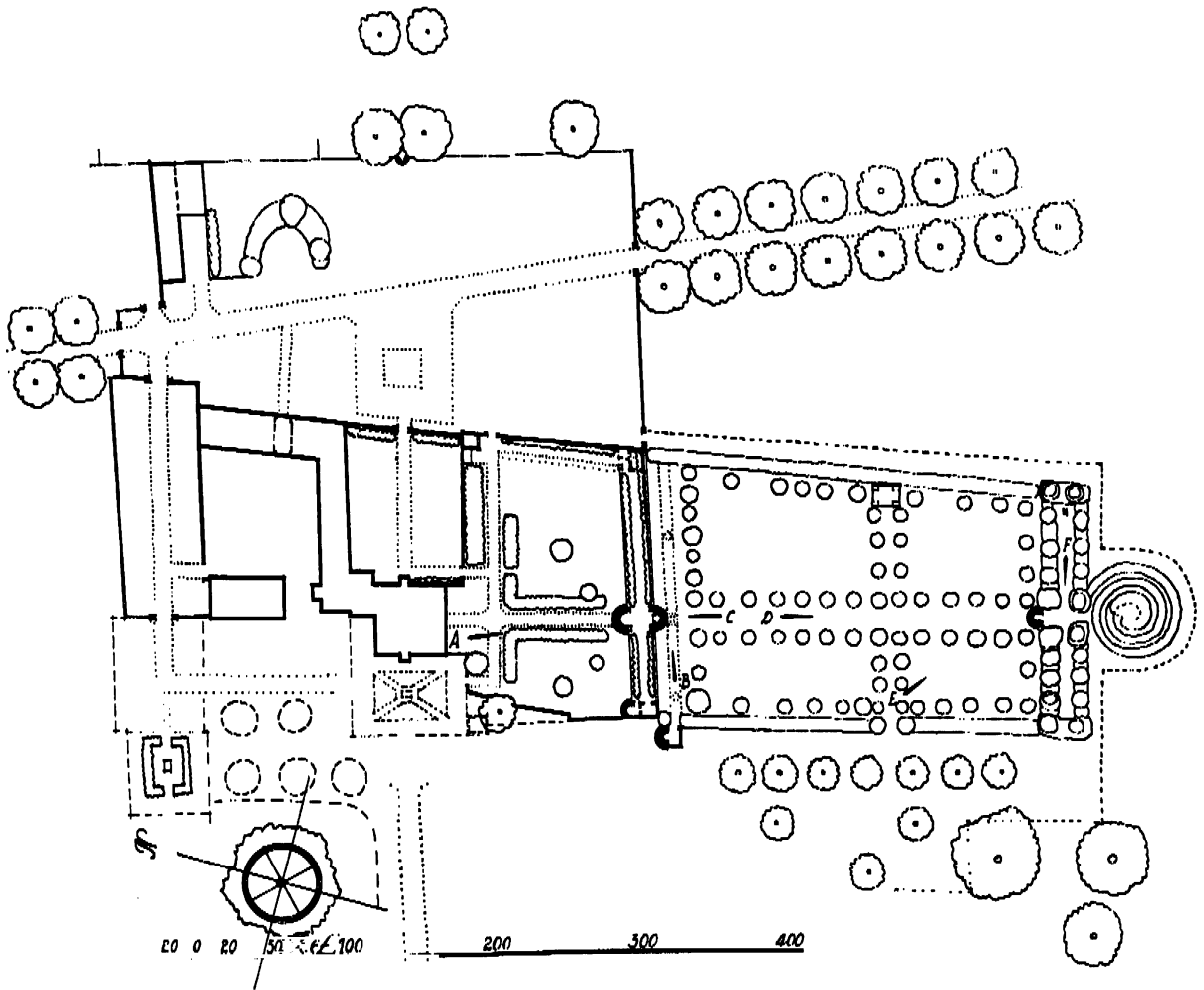


Packwood House, Warwickshire.

(Viewpoint A on plan.)


THE ENGLISH TRADITION

were very simple pleached alleys and galleries to provide shade; there were arbours, fishponds, topiary work, generally a raised walk from which to see the view or garden, and sometimes a mount. The garden house, carrying on the architecture, appears constantly. All these had been expanded from ideas in the Middle Ages, but the mound, at any rate, suggests how detached the Elizabethan



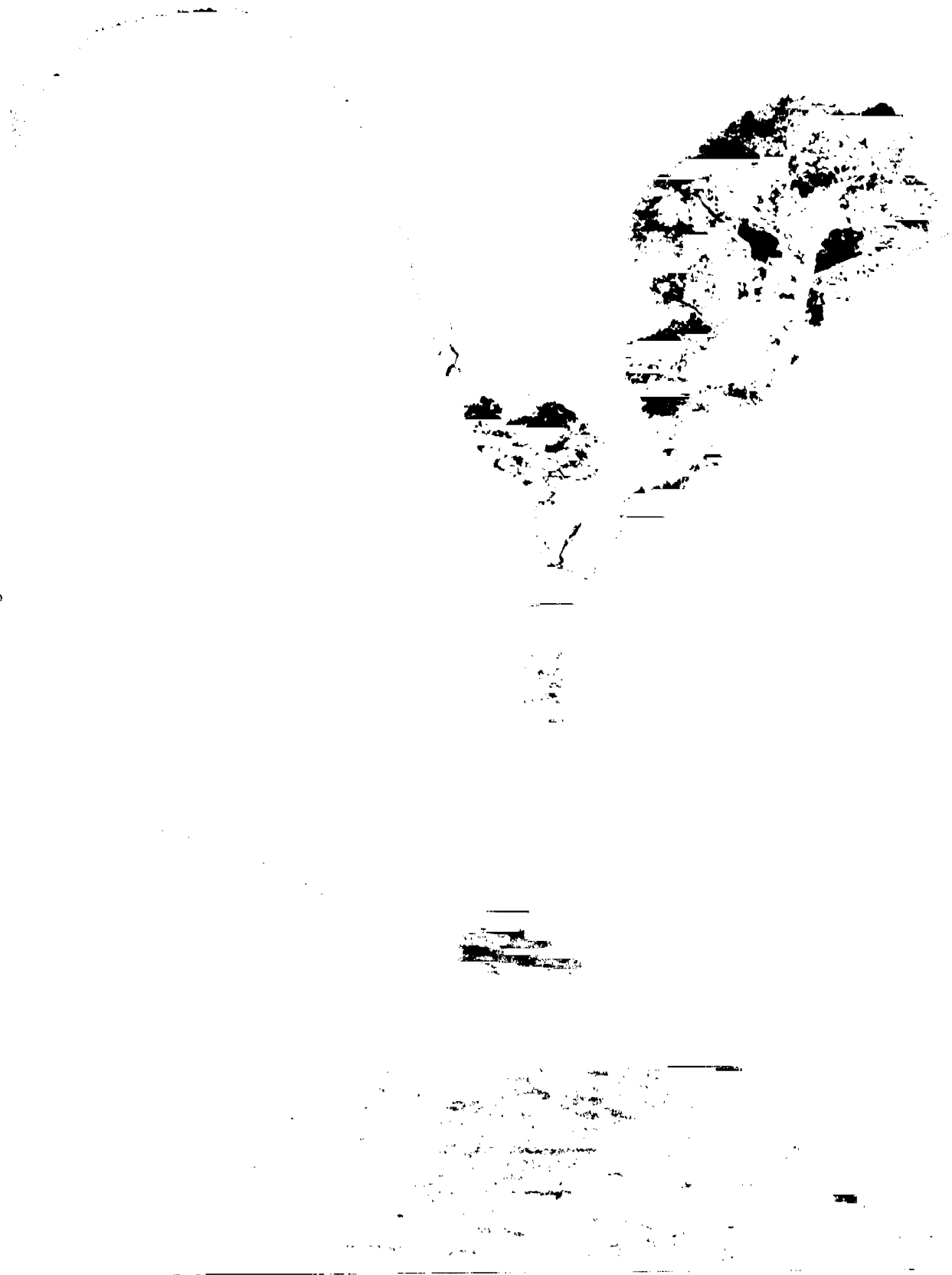
Packwood House, Warwickshire.

was becoming from his surroundings; in the enclosed garden of the Middle Ages it was at least a necessity. At this time, just as with the detail on the buildings, the worse side of the Italian influence was beginning to be felt in such conceits as water-works and grottos, details that were not so well absorbed by the spirit of the garden as they had been by that of the house. The heart of the garden lay in the still mediæval flowers and knots. Flowers were planted

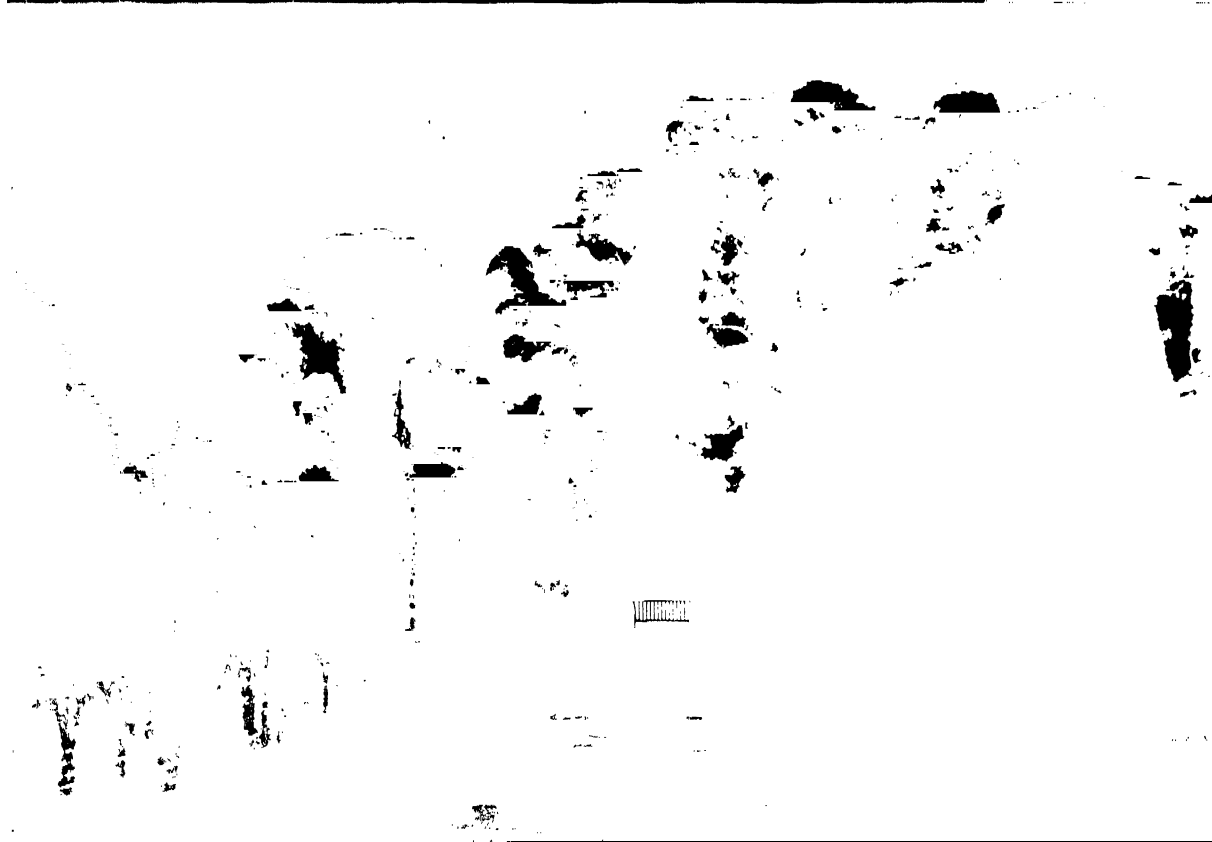
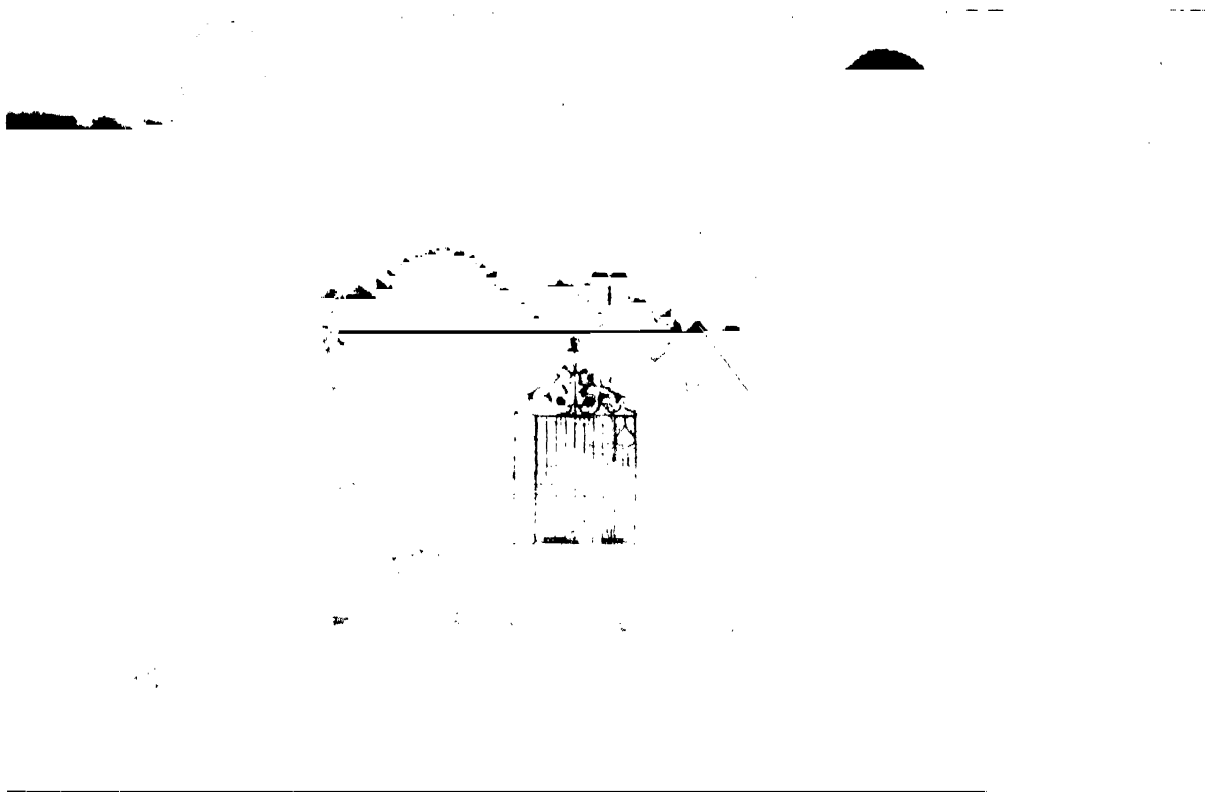


Packwood House, Warwickshire.
(Viewpoint D on plan.)

Packwood House, Warwickshire.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)



Packwood House, Warwickshire.
(Viewpoint F on plan.)



Packwood House, Warwickshire.

Above : Viewpoint C on plan. Below : Viewpoint B on plan.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

in square beds, raised above the surrounding paths. A knot was a more intricate design than a flower bed, and its interest therefore lay in the form of the pattern rather than the colours. These were made up of rosemary, hyssop, and thyme, and soon developed so that the borders were to be of " ' Roses, thorns, lavender, rosemaries, isop, sage, and such like,' and filled in with primroses and violets, ' Daffydown dillies,' ' sweet Sissely,' ' go to bed at noone,' and all sweet flowers, but chief of all with gilly flowers, the favourite flower of the English Renaissance."*

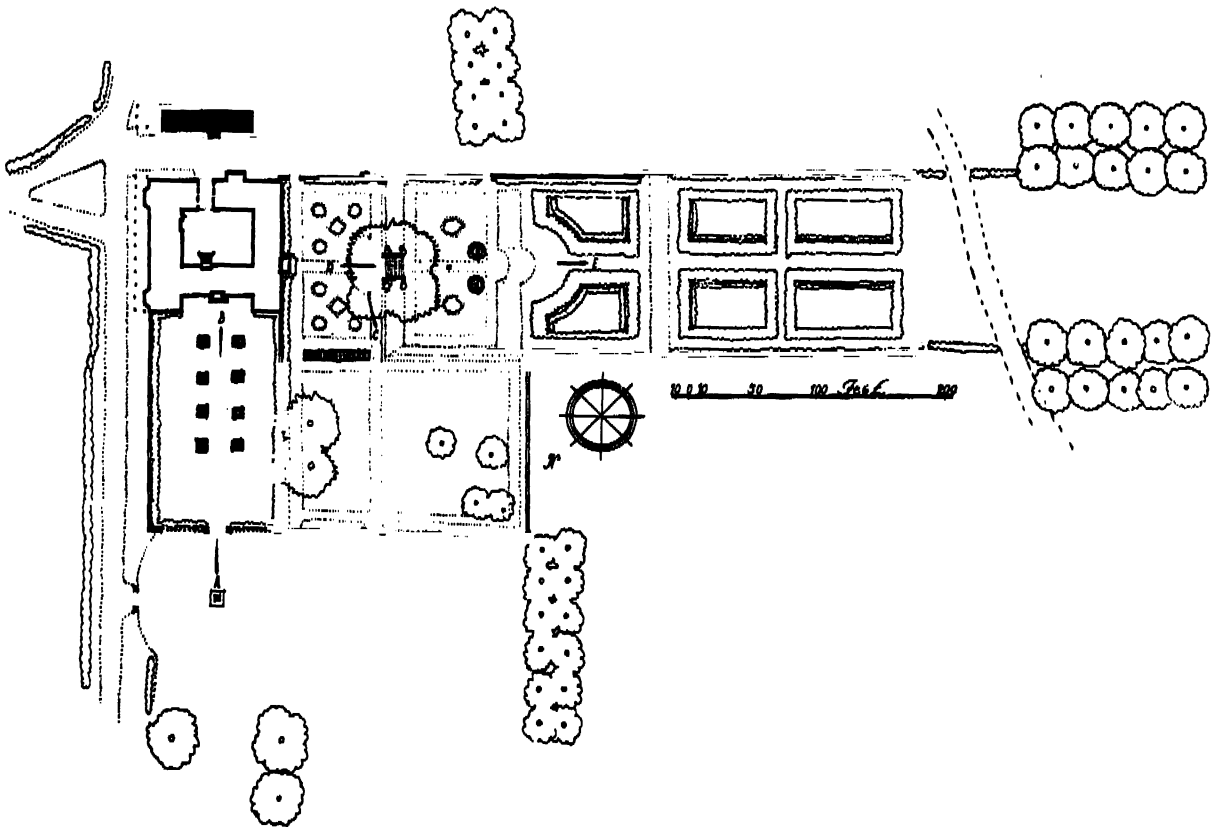
There is, perhaps, no complete Elizabethan or early Stuart garden to-day, although many houses still exist to tell of the greatness of that age. Many of them have preserved a certain character, and Montacute in Somersetshire gives a suggestion of the house in relation to its surroundings. The ornaments pricking the sky show how the Elizabethan was still feeling the influence of the now distant mediævalism. Two great houses, both belonging to the Earl of Salisbury, and dating from the time of James I., are still Elizabethan in character. Cranborne Manor in Dorset was used mainly as a hunting lodge, and the enclosed forecourt to the south and enclosed garden to the north may date from an earlier time than when Viscount Cranborne, later the first Earl of Salisbury, turned the house from a fortified manor into an up-to-date residence. There is all the suggestion of the love of open air in the loggia, its details and idea clearly taken from Italy, even to the aspect, but ably worked into traditional architecture. Hatfield House was a grander undertaking. The house is placed on the highest ground, and is definitely the centre of a lay-out that stretches symmetrically from each façade. To the north there is the approach avenue and forecourt, to the east a series of open descending terraces, to the south another but more spacious grass avenue framed in between twin garden houses, and to the west are gardens more secluded. Here is the square flower garden with its enclosing foliaged gallery reminiscent of Bacon's garden.

* Reginald Blomfield, "The Formal Garden in England"; William Lawson, "The Country Housewife's Garden" (1618).

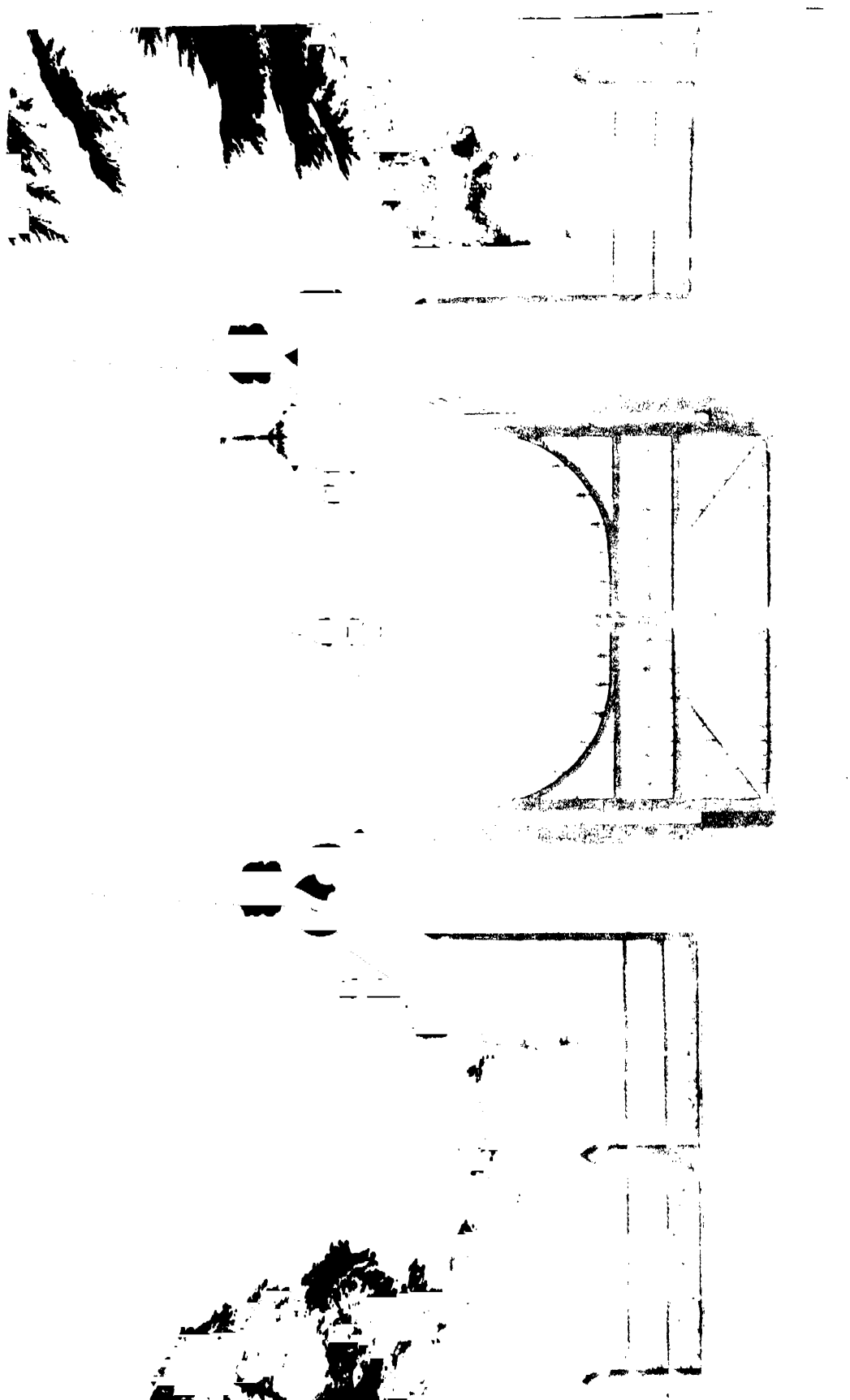
THE ENGLISH TRADITION

1625-1700

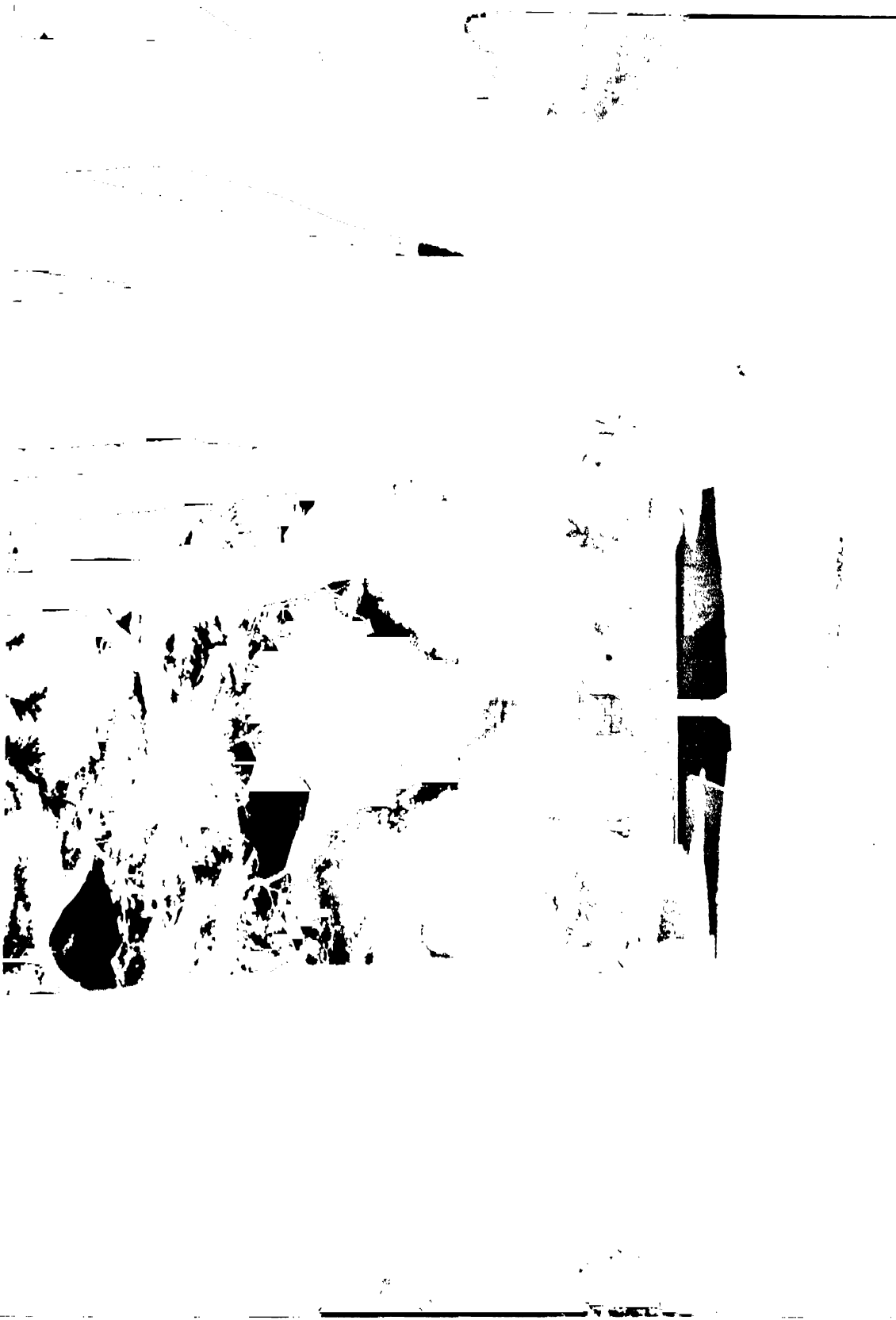
The accession of Charles I. to the throne in 1625 meant the introduction of the Renaissance with its full significance. That monarch was both powerful and interested enough to further the arts in England personally, and Inigo Jones was the great personality at hand. It was from his wide travels in Italy that Inigo Jones felt the stirrings that the Italian nation had felt two hundred years before. He brought back to his native country a discipline in architecture to find the counterpart of which one has to go back as far as Roman days. A firm hold was laid upon houses and gardens up and down the country, modified only slightly to conform to climatic and other conditions. In the hands of Inigo Jones or, after the fire of London, Christopher Wren, these notions from abroad were moulded into a very fine architecture, but



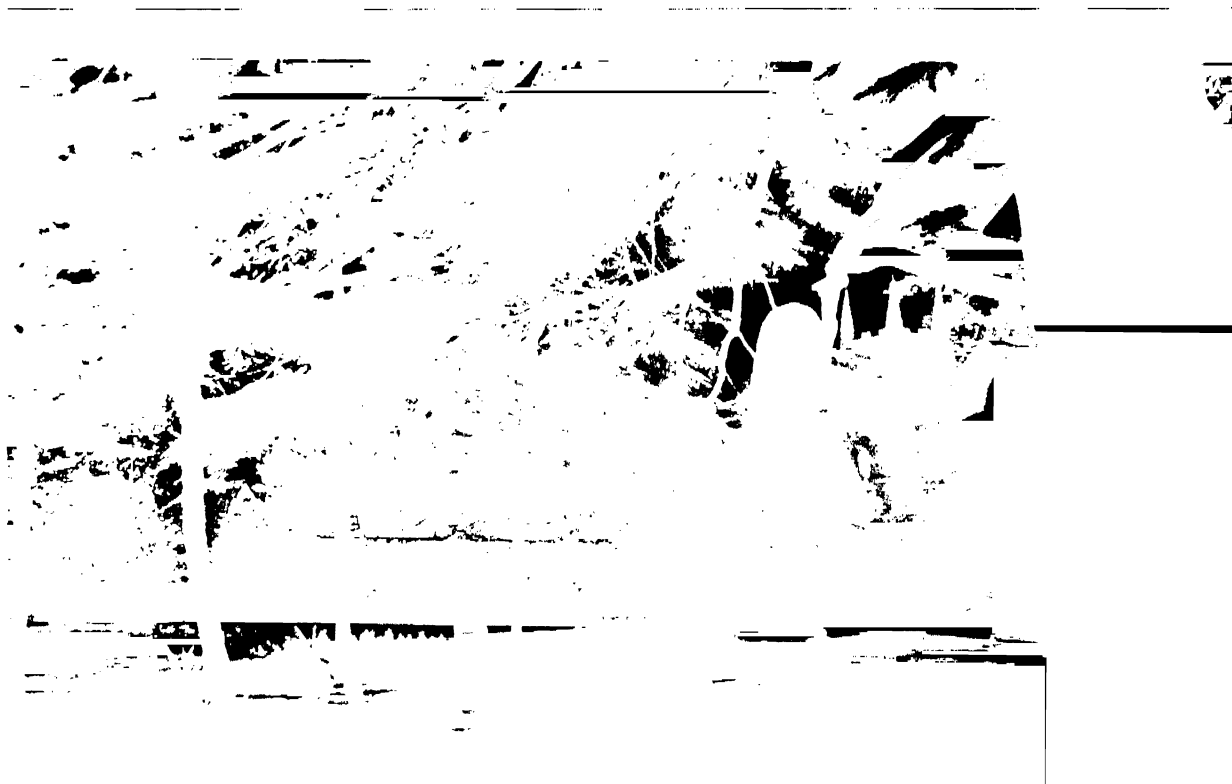
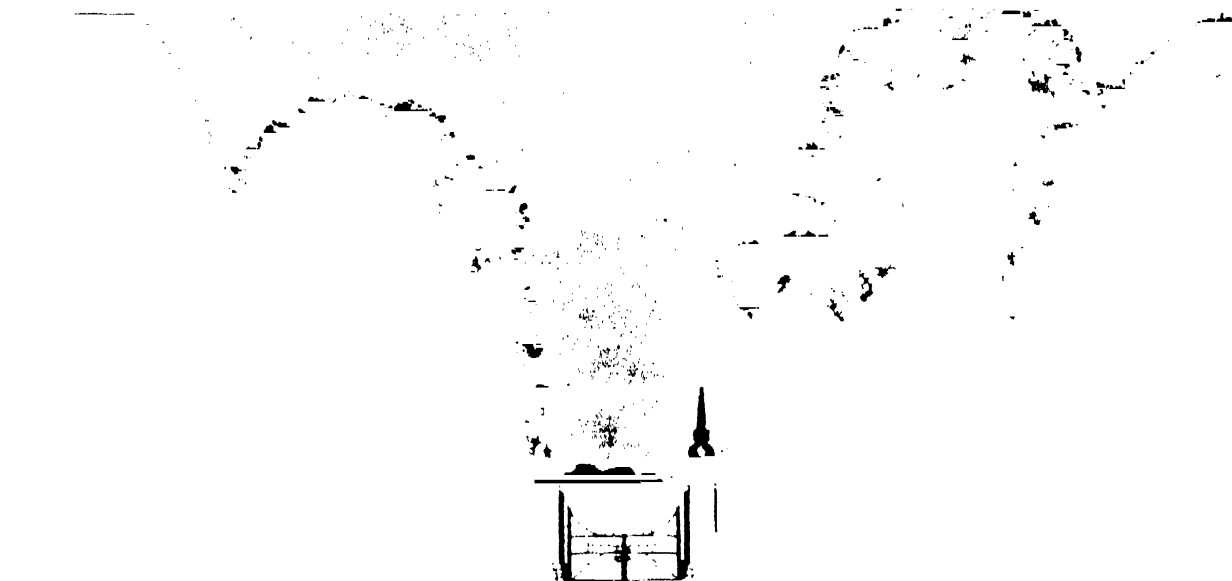
Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.



Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.
(Viewpoint A on plan.)

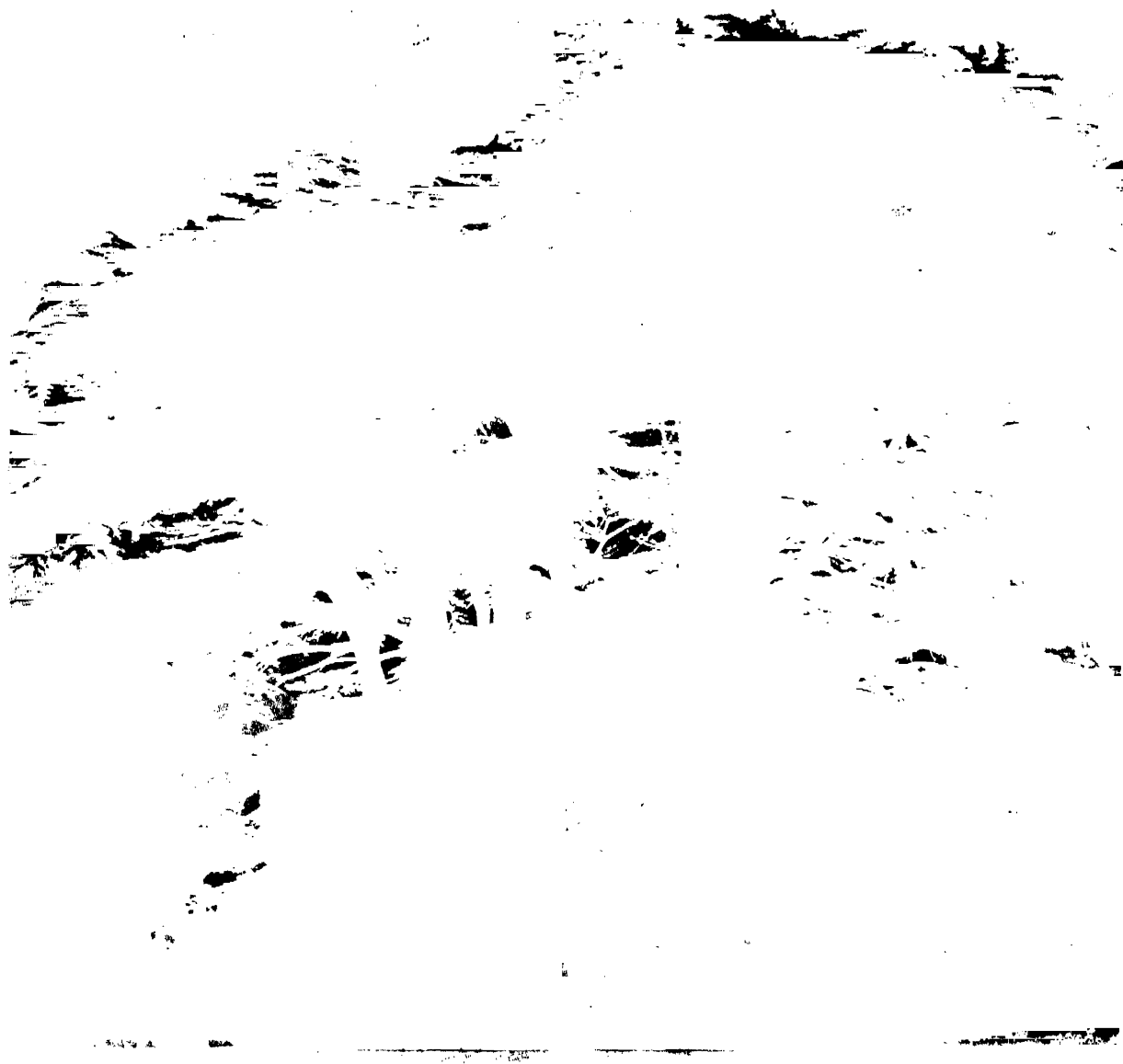


Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.
(Viewpoint D on plan.)



Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.

Above : Viewpoint B on plan. *Below* : Viewpoint C on plan.

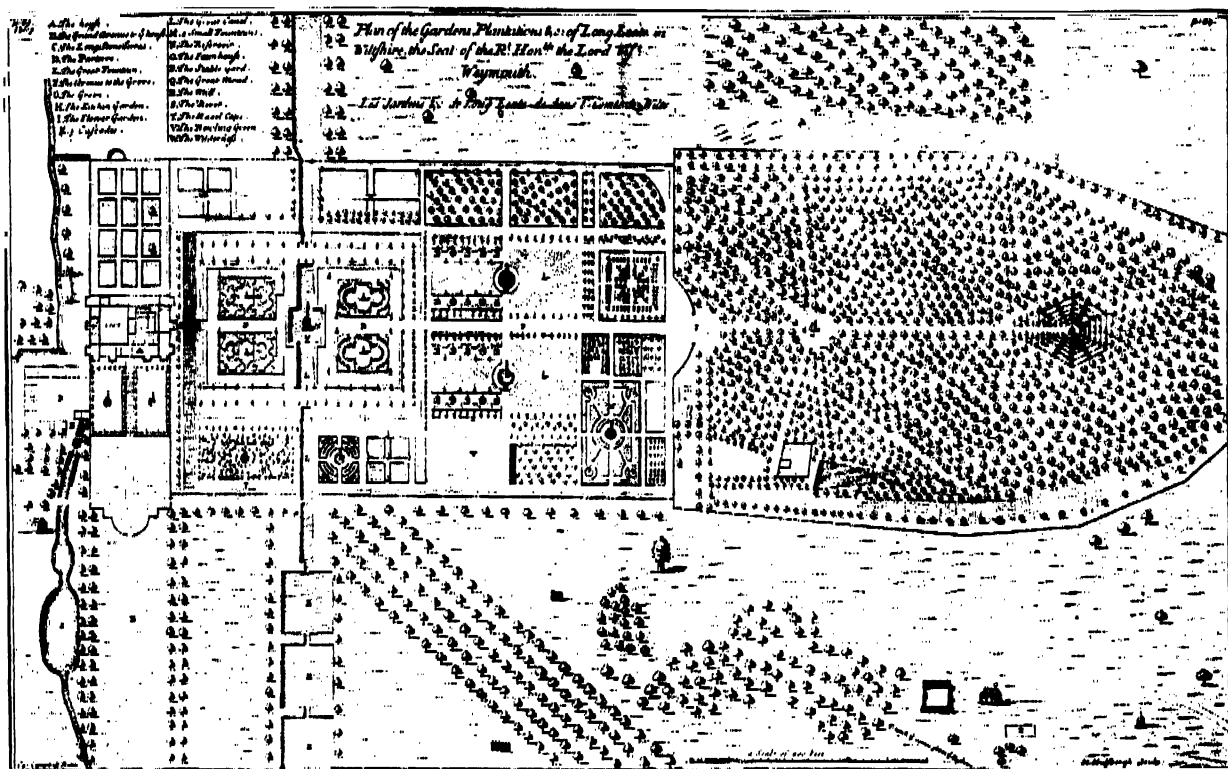


Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN

in smaller hands gardens especially were liable to suffer from the misguided copying of foreign examples. One wonders to what an extent that gifted amateur, John Evelyn, who visited and described so many gardens in Italy at that period, influenced the Englishman by the letter rather than the spirit of the Italian garden. But many fine houses, built of English materials and still with the traditional idea of compartments lurking behind their design, date from this time. Two huge walled gardens, the enormous built-up view terrace, and, above all, the piers, are all that remain of Hamstead Marshall in Berkshire. The conception is of the simplest, for it was but an enlargement of the earlier gardens. The site is a level piece of high ground, with views around. The garden has taken a certain area, and planted itself quite crudely on the ground, but the terrace is there for anyone who takes the trouble to climb up and see the view. Despite the bluntness of placing, now very much softened by time, these places had a simple dignity that earlier or later gardens with their sympathy or technique must often have lacked. There is charm especially over the small English house and garden, broadly termed Georgian, that is largely due to the fine proportion of the one and the simplicity of the other. In detail, many sophisticated foreign examples were often well employed to adorn traditional buildings (page 168). The course that garden planning took in England before the French influence stepped in is represented to us to-day mainly by the many prints that were made at the time. The knowledge of planning, apart from the house, that first came over with the Renaissance, was particularly slight. At the time Wren may be said to be almost the only one with any technique at all. When the site chosen seemed more interesting than at Hamstead Marshall, the gardens were extended on traditional rectangular lines to any extent, sometimes, even so late as at New Park in Surrey, making enormous excavations to make their terraces. Other gardens, like Ragly in Warwickshire (page 76), betrayed a technique in formal planning that must have been almost disheartening in its perfect symmetry. While these undoubtedly stately and well-proportioned houses were setting themselves down bluntly in some of the choicest scenery in England, alterations were being made to many

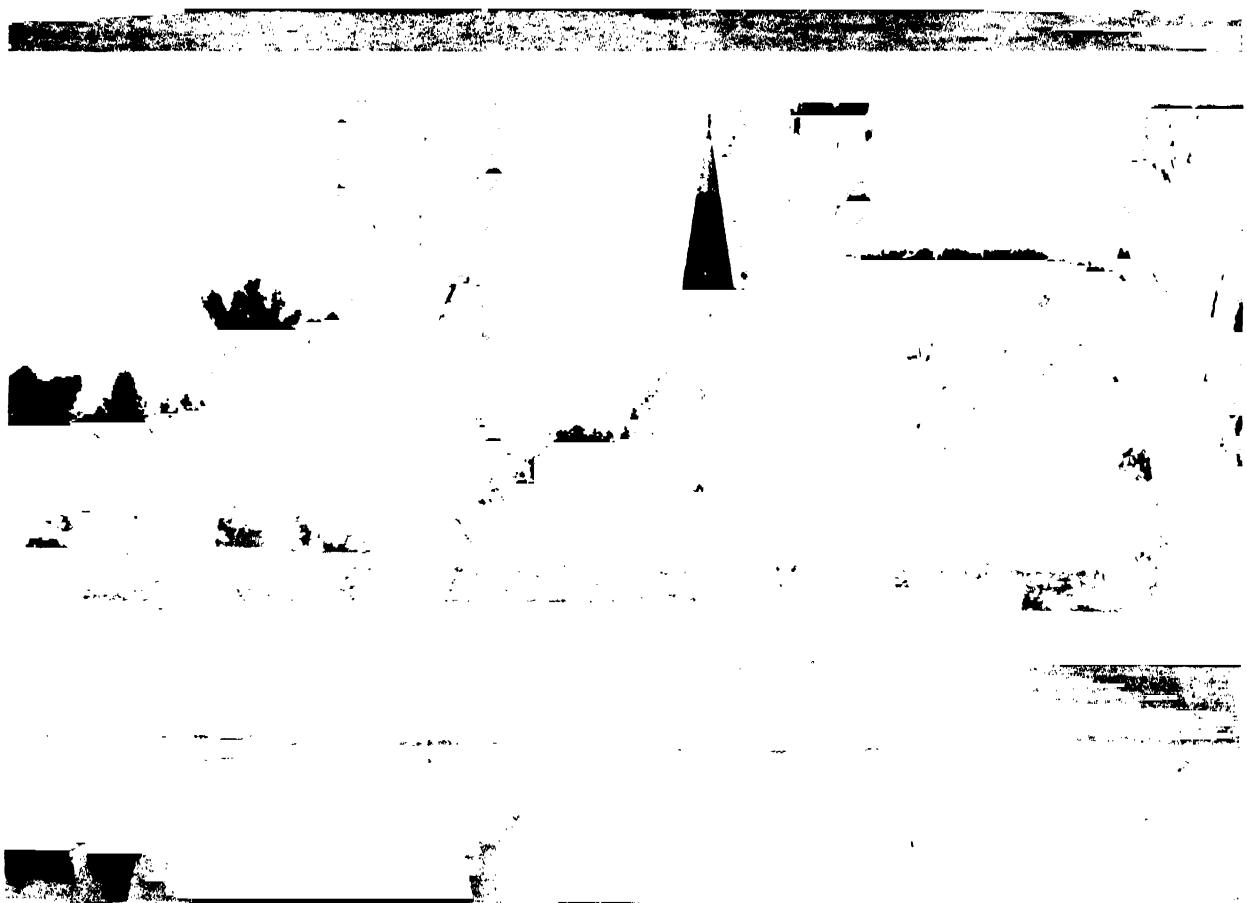
THE ENGLISH TRADITION



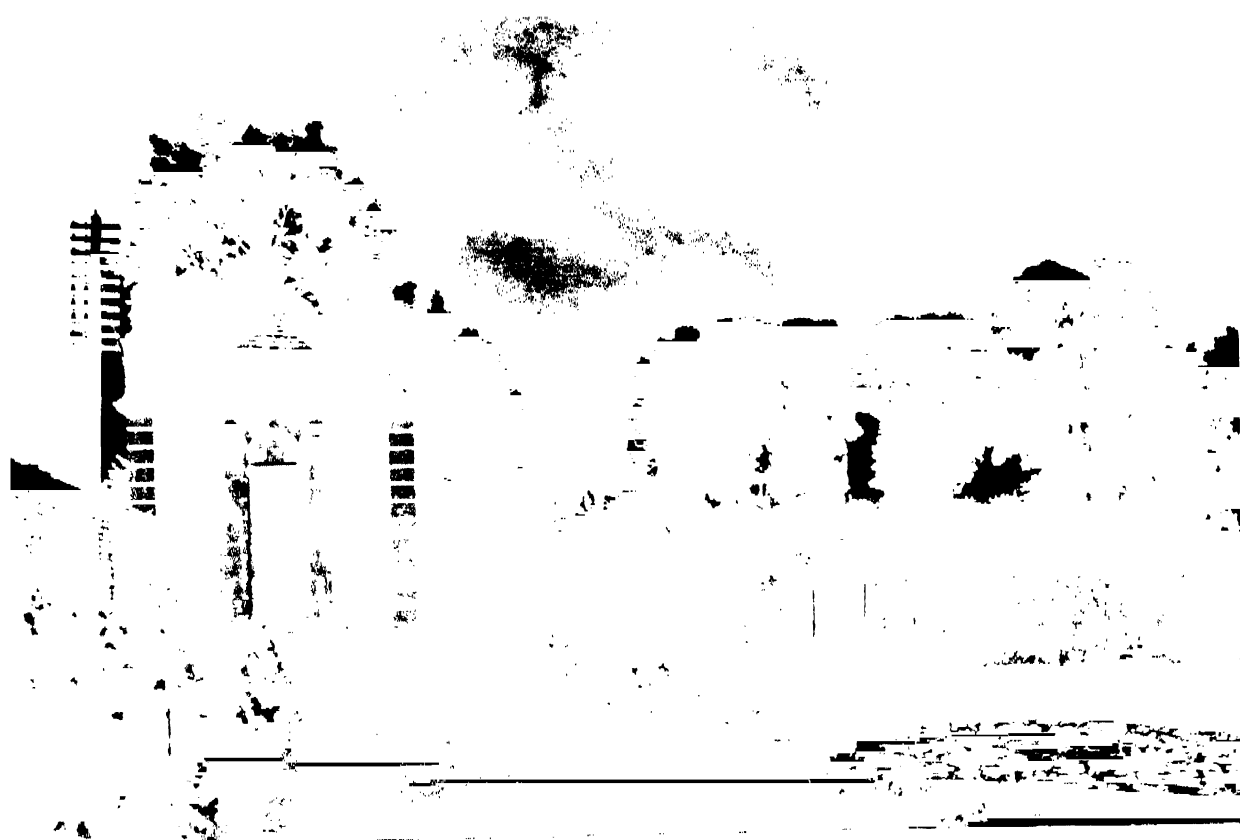
Longleat, Wiltshire. (By London and Wise.)

older existing houses in bringing them up to date. Because these places were older and generally smaller than those of the day, the English tradition behind them was still strong enough to absorb and make use of fresh ideas, much as the Elizabethan mansion had done many years before. Over Packwood in Warwickshire and Canons Ashby in Northamptonshire there still lingers the spell of the house and garden that belong to the country in which they have grown.

Warwickshire has a large share of associations peculiarly English: Kenilworth Castle, Compton Wynyates (the most intriguing of all mediæval houses), and finally Stratford-on-Avon and the Forest of Arden. It is a few miles north of the long straggling town of Henley-in-Arden that one discovers one of the most curious gardens in the country. Packwood is essentially English. It has that want of a complete unified plan (for the group of buildings that embrace the road are the result of accident as much as design) that seems to characterise English work; it plays with the most beautiful materials; and, above all, it has a worldliness combined with a curious vague, indefinable mysticism that seems to be



Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.
Above : Viewpoint A on plan. Below : Viewpoint B on plan.



Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.

Above : Viewpoint F on plan. Below : Viewpoint E on plan.



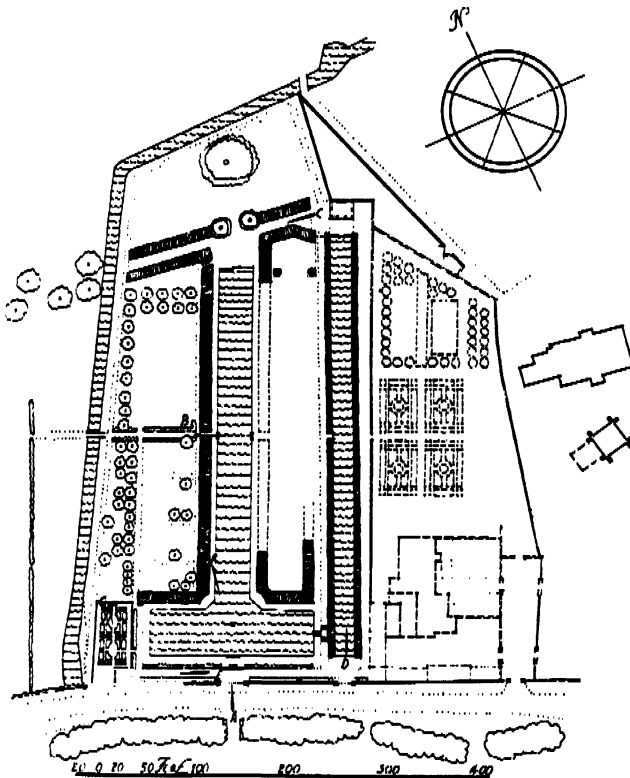
Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.
(Viewpoint D on plan.)



Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.
(Viewpoint G on plan.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN

somehow inherent in the northern race. The garden mainly lies south-east of the house, and is a direct throw-back to earlier days. It is entered from the house or by a door in the wall from the forecourt, and from that moment, owing to the slight stage-like rise in the ground, the whole garden lies outstretched. In the foreground is the rectangular flower garden, its corners once enclosing four little garden houses. The small raised terrace so reminiscent of earlier days



Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.

Showing conjectural plan of original house.

separates this from what lies behind: yews and mysticism. It is the story of the Sermon on the Mount. Step into this medley and its idea takes us back to the days when the teaching of the Church held its sway over the human mind. The lawyer who planted these yews must have been a disciple of Milton. When we pass up the central way we are passing through the strange diverse shapes of the multitude; at the top are the twelve apostles with the four evangelists in the centre; and on the Mount is the tree symbolising the Teacher. Reached by a spiral path after such an impressive journey, the arbour in the tree must have been, and remains, a

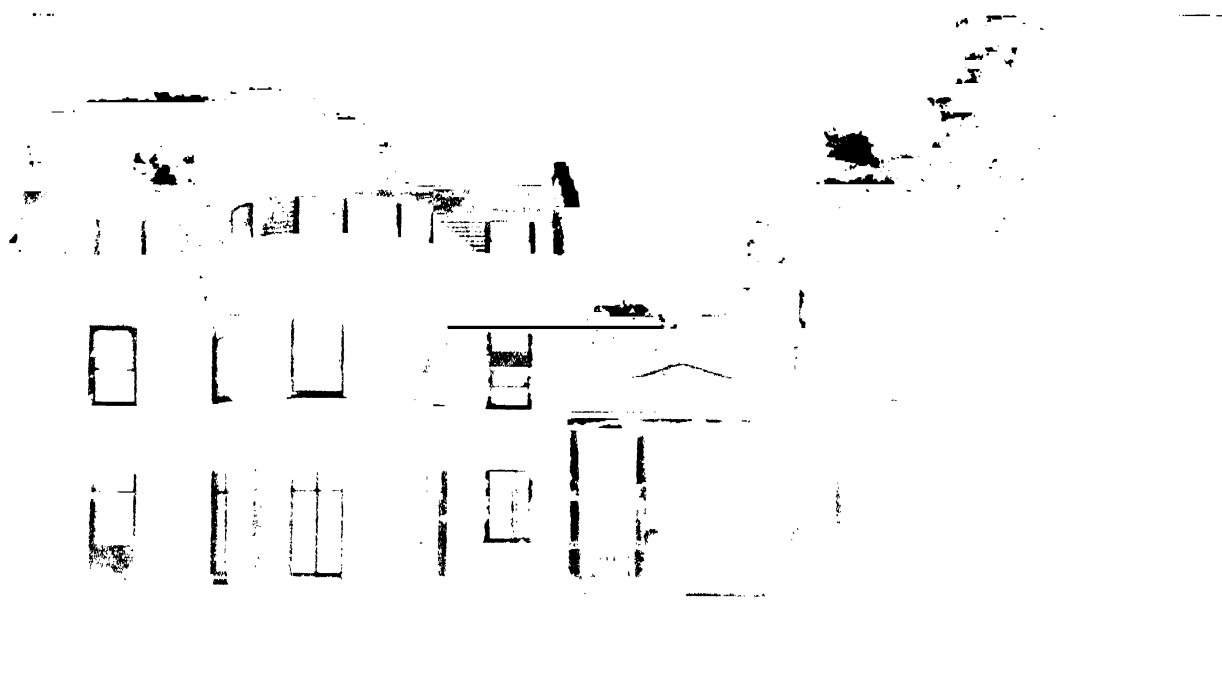
place for deepest meditation. Over the garden there would have been heard the buzzing of the bees whose hives were contained in the holes of the terrace wall; the orchard along the west boundary brings us back to to-day; and the great elms reminds us of the freshness of country that lies beyond.

Canons Ashby is situated in an undulating and fairly well-wooded part of Northamptonshire, and together with the church and one or two cottages makes



Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.

(Viewpoint C on plan.)



Above : At Climping, Sussex.
Below : Percy Lodge, Richmond.
Typical late Renaissance houses.

Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

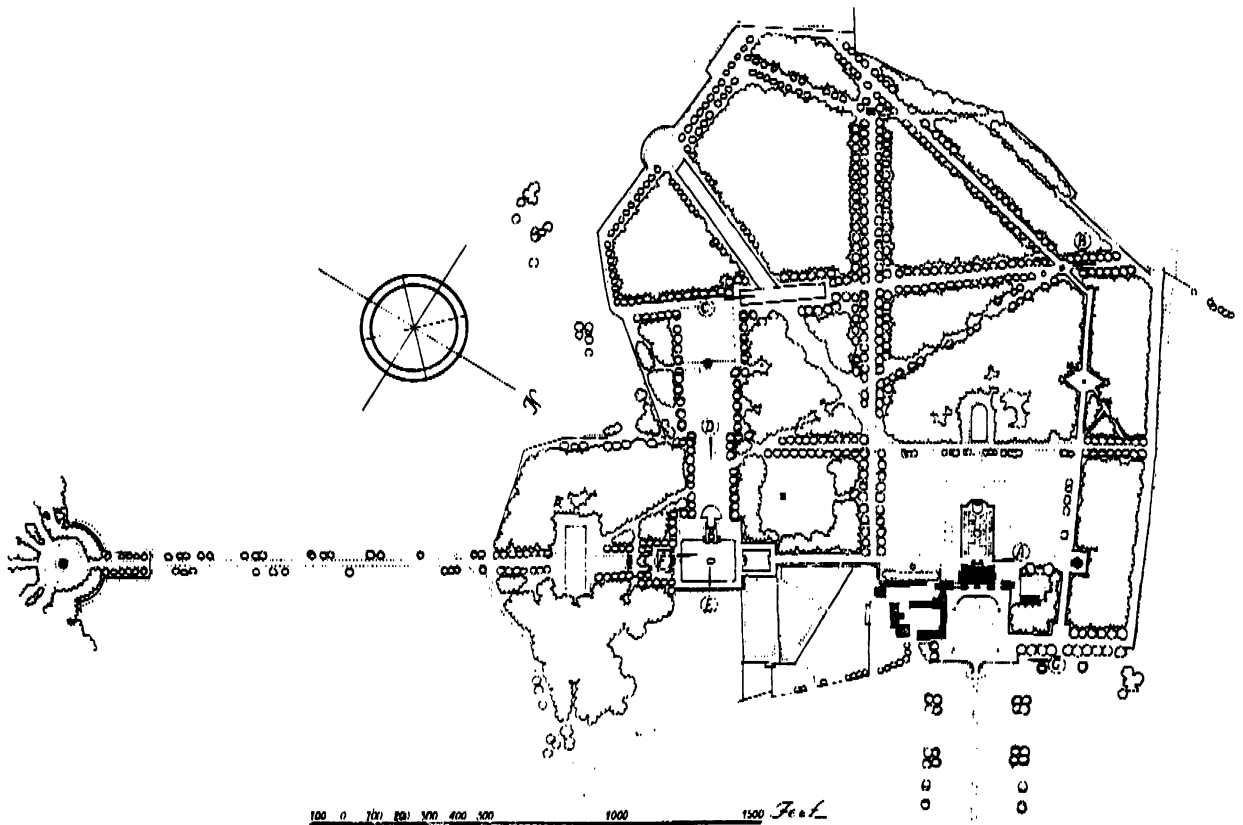
a harmonious group of warm brown stone. The house dates back from the fortified times of the small enclosed courtyard and battlemented tower, but its subsequent history is written more clearly in the garden. The approach, disused to-day, leads up to a partially enclosed forecourt, and Renaissance piers and details contrast in age and design with the older work. Out into the garden a vista stretches between two splendid cedars, two clipped trees that yield to the lines of the cedars, two more gate piers, a double row of elms, and so on into infinity. This is the central part of the garden, but to one side is another simpler grass square, again open to the south, but with an entirely different prospect from that given by the avenue. There is nothing but a four-foot drop between the built-up ground of the terrace and a broad meadow that goes sweeping down to a lake and up and over the hill beyond. There are many small details in the garden that help to give it the quality of permanence. There is the remains of a stately avenue of trees; the church is far enough away not to be oppressive, but its tower has become an integral part of the garden; terraces give an unexpected variety and substance to the buildings. The lay-out is so simple and open it carries us back to earlier days, and although such history as is available seems against us, we can imagine that the parts of the garden extending from the two façades entirely date from 1550 rather than only a portion. In 1708 Sir Edward Dryden came to alter the house and add the fancy to relieve the severe. Later the English School of Landscape Gardening must have been responsible not only for the cedars that give so much of the character, but probably also for arranging the view towards the lake into a definite pictorial composition.

WILLIAM AND MARY

These two, Packwood and Canons Ashby, though comparatively late in date, were unaffected by the Restoration and the consequences that followed on the close relations between Charles Stuart and France. France was now at the height of her prestige and glory. All Europe was turning to her for inspiration in the arts, for Louis set the fashion for the world. It became acknowledged

GARDENS AND DESIGN

that a magnificent house demanded a magnificent garden. The elements that go to make a French garden, avenues and canals, were seized upon and used profusely in English gardens. At Hampton Court, London and Wise laid out the semicircular garden before Wren's buildings, and planted the radiating avenues with the canal in the central, perhaps the first of its kind in England. Wrcst in Bedfordshire was another great scheme with one central canal leading up to a monumental pavilion by Archer. Le Nôtre himself undoubtedly came



Bramham Park, Yorkshire.

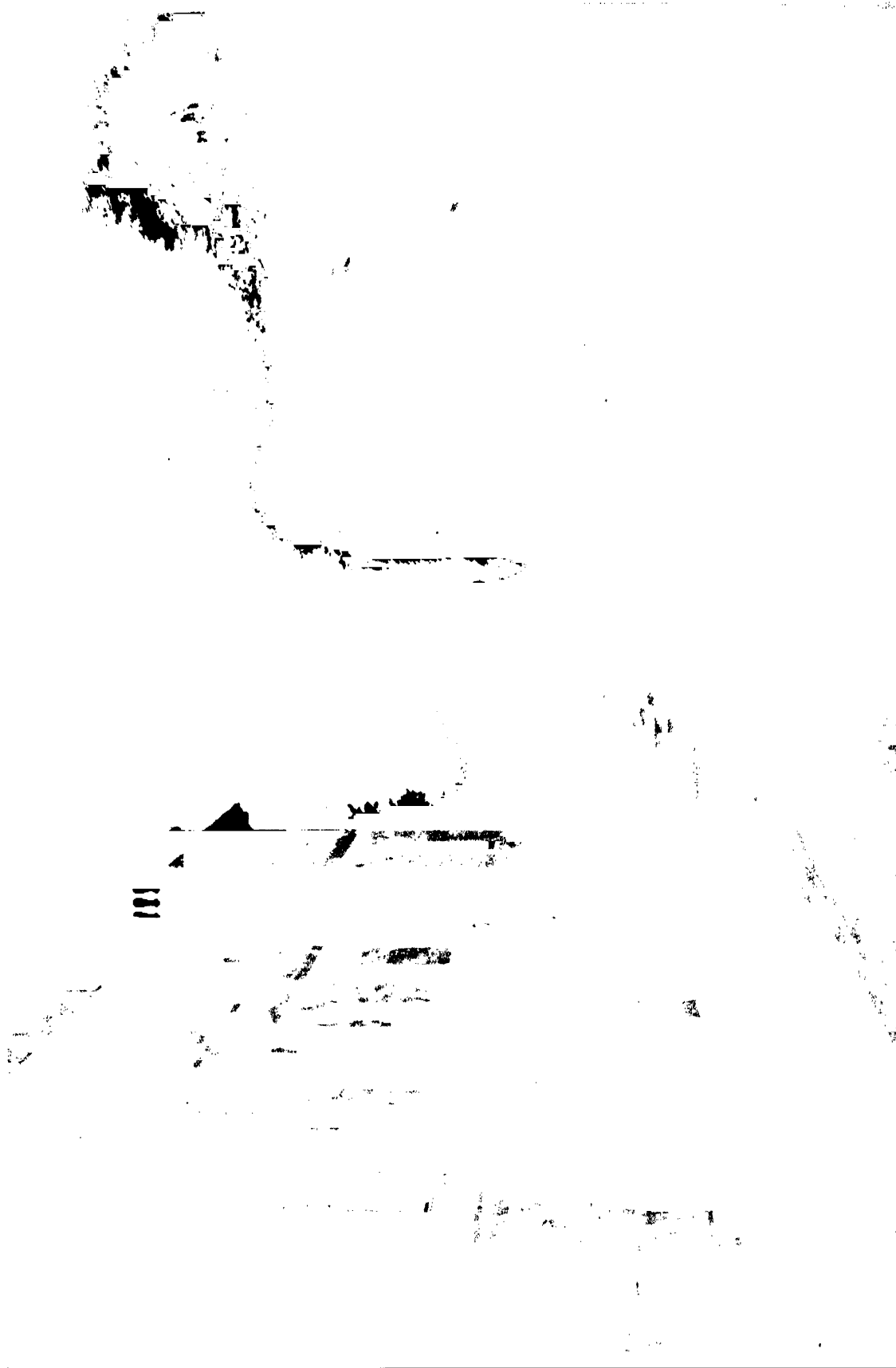
over, and among other designs attributed to him was almost certainly responsible for the Mall. With the grand ideas came also details that the French had brought to such perfection—box parterre with its rich shapes, "charmilles," cascades and sculpture.

In 1688, however, William and Mary secured the English throne. With them came a host of partisans, and there spread through the country an influence of the Netherlands that for a brief space broke in upon that of France.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

We must turn to the low-lying flats and canals of Holland to see how garden architecture had been developing in that country. The cultivation of flowers, especially tulips, had the first consideration, and the garden was often a studied and firm architectural background to flowers. So rises the term "Dutch garden" that became popular in England at this period. The small space available, and the difficulty of growing large trees owing to the soil and wind, led also to a violent development of topiary work, and we can suppose that Anne was not altogether unjustified in removing the overgrown semicircular parterre topiary garden at Hampton Court. Perhaps because of the confined spaces, the Dutchman loved to contemplate the passing world over his pipe, and it is in that country that the *clairvoyée* and the gazebo are in their natural element. The *clairvoyée* is the broad window in the walls of an enclosed garden, and the gazebo at that time was a small pavilion each of whose windows might give a different prospect; one especially looked upon the high-road and the approach. Above all, the Dutch influence on garden design brought over with it a calm, comfort-loving point of view reminiscent of the substantial wealthy traders of Amsterdam.

On the further side of the Severn estuary, where a plain separates the river from the forest-crowned hills and mountains of Wales, and in striking contrast both in situation and character to the not far distant Owlpen Manor, lies a garden built by a partisan of William III., having in its design the combined qualities of Englishman and Dutchman. The church tower and spire at Westbury are unique in the country, and it may have been this thirteenth-century free standing feature, so markedly vertical, that inspired the long low lines of the garden itself. Once it was definitely a part of the scheme, but its place as a foil is taken to-day by the twin poplars that herald the end of the T canal. The main Roman road to the village passes one of those gazebos, its window now blocked up, and in a moment piers announce a *clairvoyée* in the wall. After the road outside nothing could be so refreshing to the passer-by as this garden spread so generously before him: the canal, grass perpetually emerald because of its position, dark green hedges, and to one side the garden house rising straight above the hedges, with the warm red brick and white windows contrasting with the rest.



Bramham Park, Yorkshire.
(Viewpoint A on plan.)



Bramham Park, Yorkshire.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)



Bramham Park, Yorkshire.

(Viewpoint B on plan.)

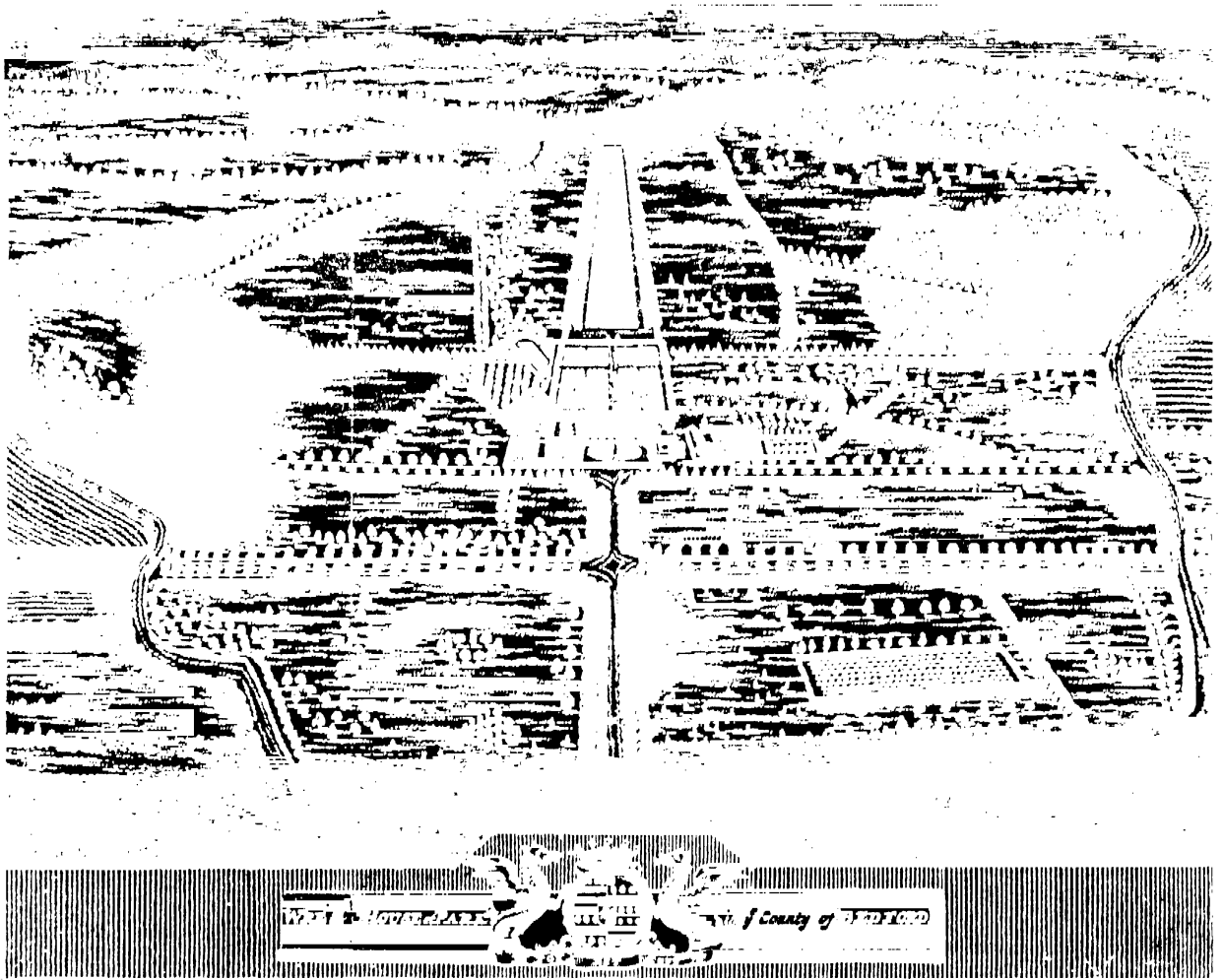


Bramham Park, Yorkshire.

(Viewpoint C on plan.)

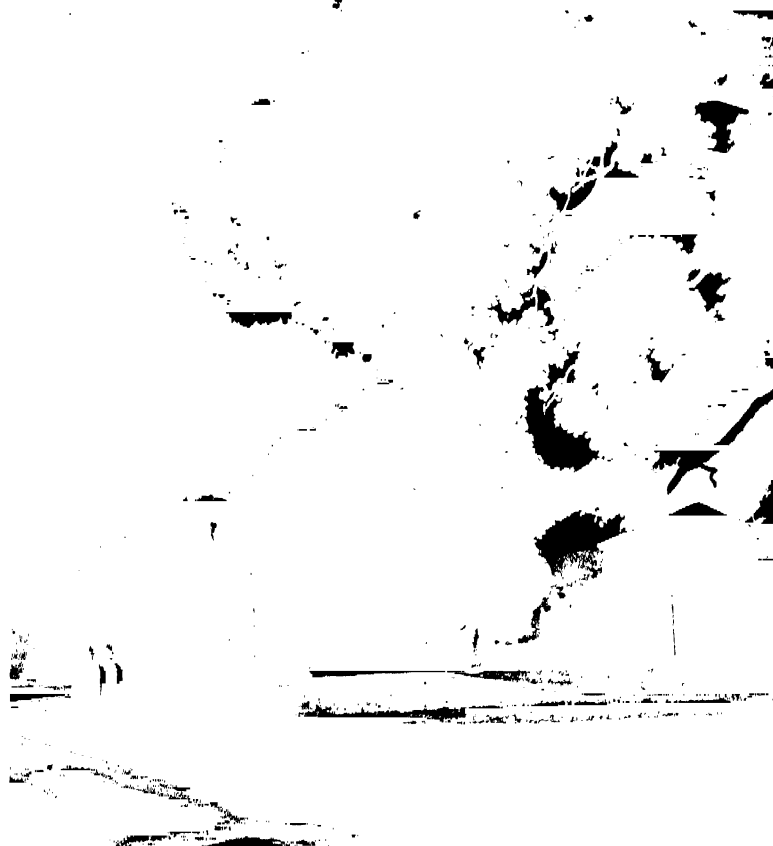
THE ENGLISH TRADITION

Farther on there is another clairvoyée and a small canal leads directly to the little house. Within the garden itself all is peaceful. The mansion and the parterre garden in front of it have gone, and probably many of the hedges may have been topiary. Only once, apart from the clairvoyée, has it been necessary to take us out of this garden. One avenue leads from that view-point, the garden



Wrest House, Bedfordshire.

house, skewed round to lead the eye along what was once an avenue of pear trees over the top of an unusually undulating piece of ground. Leaving the elevated room of the garden house, so carefully considered from its main proportions, a perfect cube, to the smallest mouldings, and passing through what is left of the quincunx, the orchard, we come to the head of the T canal, and entering



Bramham Park, Yorkshire.

Above : Viewpoint F on plan. Below : Viewpoint G on plan.

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the gate way by the gazebo, discover a small intimate rose garden, two windows looking upon it. Westbury is always calm and thoughtful, unruffled when the clouds in the canal are chasing those in the sky, but calmer when the sun sends across the long shadows of the poplars or the tip of the ancient spire reaches the water.

ANNE

The French wars under Queen Anne soon caused the Dutch influence to decline, and even before the treaty of Utrecht houses and gardens were begun more than ever French in character. Among them is Bramham Park in Yorkshire, created by the well-travelled Lord Bingley in 1712. A vast tract of country is brought into the scheme, not merely the hundred or so acres that immediately adjoin the house, but several thousand that surround this again. The map suggests the extent. A gigantic vista stretches across the garden front of the house, finishing to the west on the chapel, and disappearing into the east between charmilles and branching trees, over pools and cascades, across an open stretch of country along a line suggested to-day by a few beech trees, another wood, a temple, and culminating in an obelisk pricking the distant sky like a needle. Around this far point one knows there is a system of radiating and circular avenues cut through the woods, that suggest a second though less sophisticated lay-out than that by the house. Across this vista a wide important axis descends the hill east of the house, and this, whether so placed because of the lie of the land or not, is in reality the link between the nearer and the distant parks. Round this scheme of house, vista, and cross axis, the paths and interests that constitute the inner park are more or less arranged on a pattern. The house is one of the finest in the country. For all its details that come from Italy, it is a true English mansion, a rugged counterpart of the Yorkshire stone of which it is made. The parts of the garden immediately by the house have been altered except for the lines of the sunk garden, the vista, and the breath of open spaces that is admitted through the short open colonnade on either side of the house. Following the path that leads up past the chapel, across an avenue that gives the

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

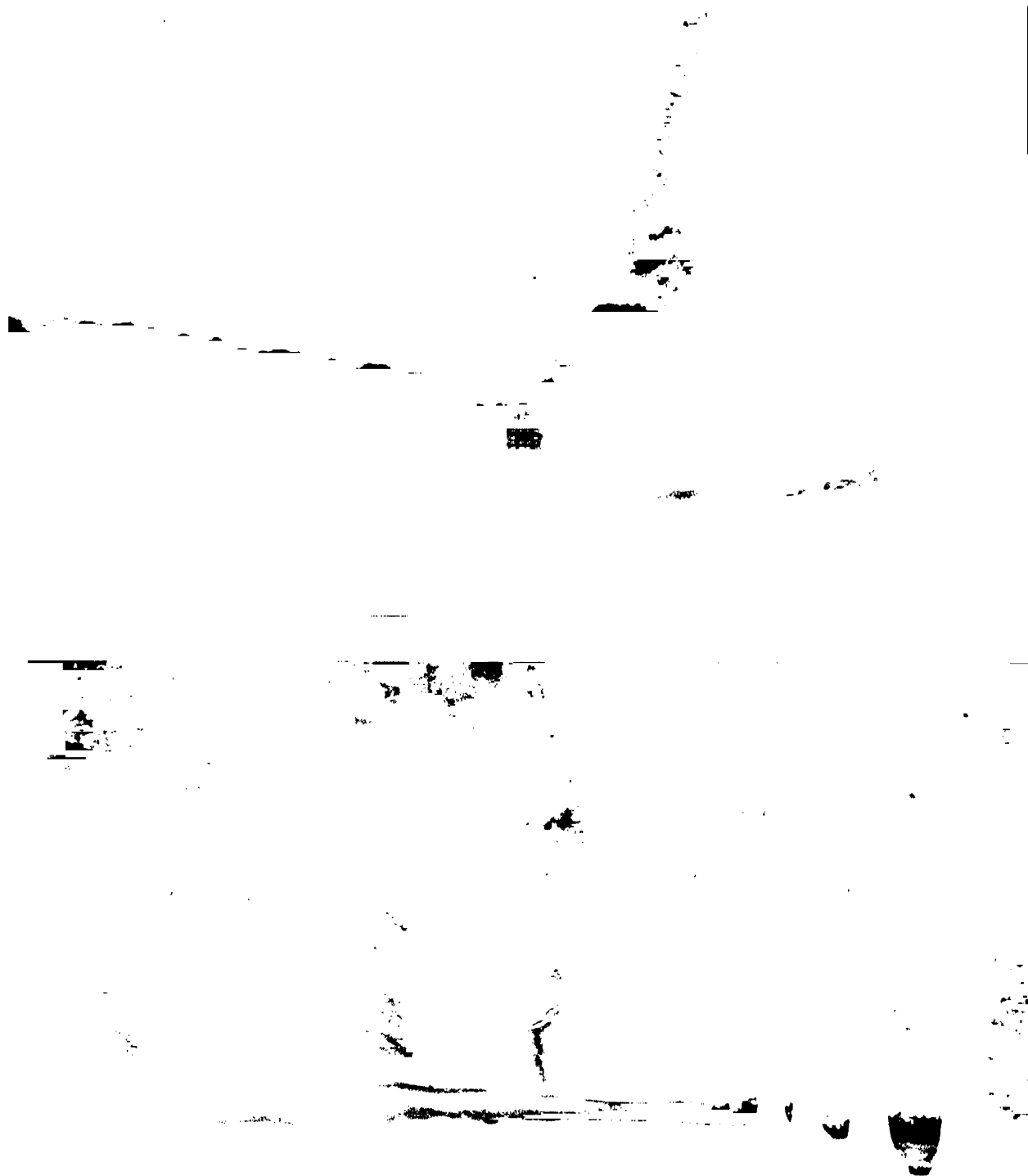
first glimpse of the country to the west, one plunges in between towering charmilles, reminiscent of France, enters an open-air diamond-shaped "salon" with passages leading invitingly into the trees, continues restfully and all unsuspecting until the path suddenly turns, and there is one of those dramatic views that abound everywhere. In the foreground is the vase of the four faces, from which radiate other avenues, and behind, a noble avenue of trees soaring upwards and arching overhead hurry away to frame a glorious view of distant woods. Along this one proceeds, with the view widening out at every step, and arrives on to what may almost be described as the ramparts. Here can now be seen how firmly the inner park is separated from the country, and yet how generously each extends into the other. The broad walk that encircles nearly half of the park is built up on an average of about six feet above the outside country. The way follows this wall until it reaches a bastion that marks the point where the tail of the T canal is trying to bring the country to the house. This curious romantic sheet of water was probably an addition to its cross piece. The avenue in which it is set, and the diagonal avenue nearer the house, disturb the simplicity of the rest. Down the canal, mirroring the slender tree trunks, and passing the head with the distant vase of the four faces silhouetted to the west, one arrives at the top of the main cross axis. Past the little Gothic summer-house that came in later days, there lies outstretched to the north another invitation to the country, more open than the avenues. The square pool lies like a silver streak in its raised position, and beyond this and framed by firm lines the country extends as a background. The cascades that descend on three sides of the pool recall those that descend the hill in the park at St. Cloud, and to-day the sound that once occurred must be imagined, the culmination in interest and design to the whole scheme.

A little later in point of date a finer garden plan, but not so fine a house, was undertaken at Boughton, near Kettering in Northamptonshire. Lord Montague was the English ambassador in France, and was therefore associated with the great gardens there even more than was Lord Bingley; so much so that the grander additions he intended to give the older house were entirely French. The park



Boughton House, Kettering, Northamptonshire.

From an old plan showing projected extensions.

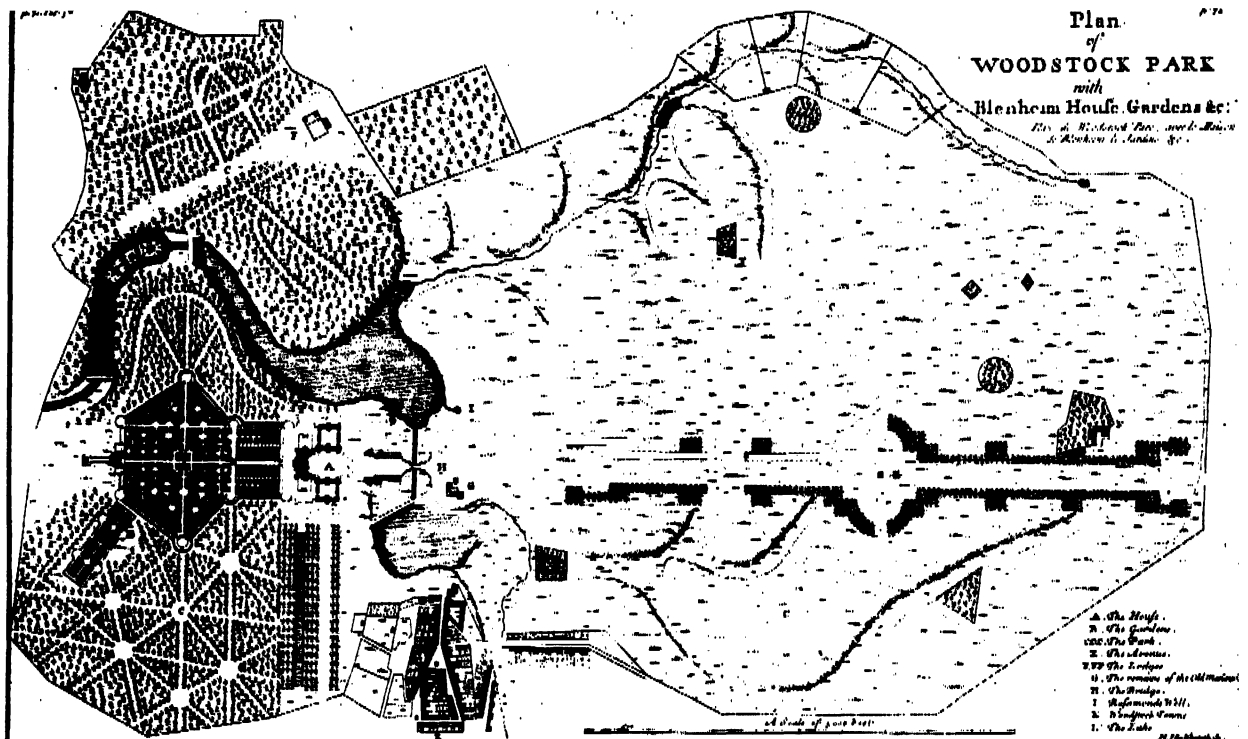


Boughton House, Kettering, Northamptonshire.

Above : The Centre Way. Below : One of the Avenues.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

is French only in its play of masses of trees and canals; in its simple lines and proportions it is very much more English than Bramham. The story goes that Lord Montague, ostensibly in order to give employment after the French wars, wished to plant an avenue the whole seventy-five miles to London. The project could not be realised, and he then planted avenues totalling that distance either across or round his estate. There are some twenty miles of these standing to-day, and long before the park itself is reached they can



Blenheim Palace, Oxford.

From Vitruvius Britannicus.

be seen like giant feelers extending from the house up hill and down dale. The park itself, like those of Le Nôtre, is a composition of trees and water, but to-day the effect has largely to be imagined, for the water has been more or less drained and the trees are imperfect. The grouping of trees down the central way must be as finely and spaciouly proportioned as any of the kind in England. It is round this sumptuous way that the interests of water and trees on either side weave themselves into a balance. Vistas that were high and narrow at

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

Bramham have been broadened, from the stretch of grass that continues the central axis over the opposite ridge, to the avenues of elms that choose for effect the most undulating piece of ground. The earthworks, digging canals, making up terraces, and above all the huge mount, were an immense undertaking; they have about them, however, a spirit that is particularly integral with the ground they have modelled. We have seen how in other gardens of this size, such as New Park in Surrey, the ground was treated almost with contempt, great pieces carved out of hillsides with little real relation to the contours. At Boughton it is the undulating ground that has given the inspiration for its modelling, just as the river Ise running through the meadows gave the spirit of the canals.

PALLADIANISM

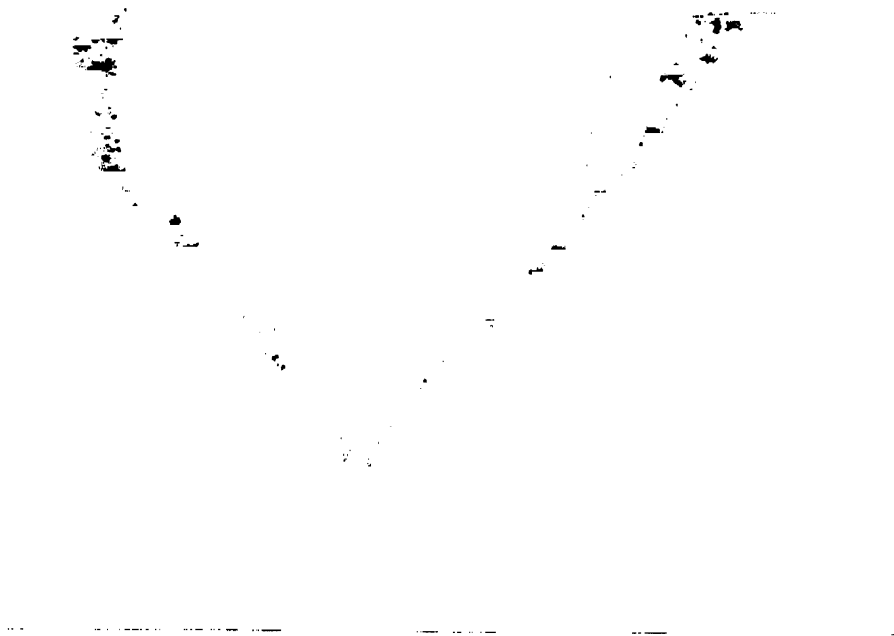
The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the introduction into this country of Palladianism. Palladio was essentially at home in towns, in Venice or Vicenza, erecting finely proportioned buildings founded on classic severity. When, however, he carried architecture into the plains or along the banks of the Brenta, he carried the same imposing ideas into the country house. These great villas were considered but slightly in relation to their position, and the lay-outs round them, if any at all, are mostly of the crudest. Partly because of the prominence that that district had come into in its relations with England, and partly because the severity and dignity of the buildings appealed to the English, it became the fashion in this country to build in the Palladian manner. Just as Wren had absorbed the foreign influence and reproduced it stamped with his own personality, so Sir John Vanbrugh, playwright and architect, appreciated the fundamental sense of design behind Palladio. The palaces of Castle Howard and Blenheim are vast, monstrous, worthy of the scathing satire of Pope, but nevertheless they are, especially the latter, superb specimens of architecture. In the design of the park surrounding Blenheim, Vanbrugh far exceeded both in design and conception any scheme of Palladio, for here is a plan worthy of one of the grandest palaces in England. In honour of the first Duke of

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Marlborough, for whom the palace was built and only partly paid for by a grateful country, the trees in the avenue are supposed to have been planted in the formation of the Battle of Blenheim. Very shortly afterwards the Landscape School took in hand the surroundings of the great mansions. The approach to Stowe is the threshold of a new world.

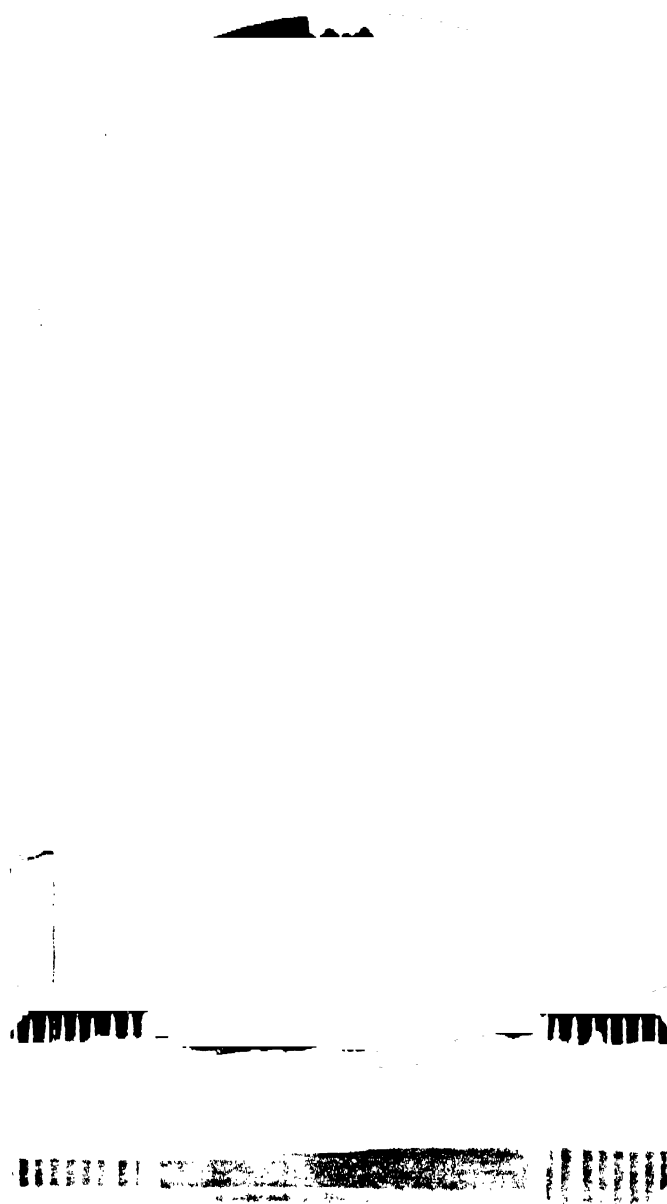
CHARACTER

The charm of the old English garden is due to the handling of materials and country rather than to abstract design. In this fact lies the real value of their study. English history shows that in planning either man or country has dominated. In the Renaissance it was frankly the former. In the Middle Ages it was country, for the apparently haphazard grouping of towns, villages, and buildings is closely related to nature; Compton Wynyates in Warwickshire might indeed be some strange natural product. Probably the true spirit of England lies somewhere between the two extremes.



The Approach to Stowe.

PART 3



Stowe.

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE GARDENING

THE arch at Stowe heralds a new era, for by the eighteenth century classicism had run its course, and England began to revolt against what was now crudely a foreign invasion. Huge masses of buildings, many of them fine compositions in themselves, slumbered like giants in a country where people, climate, and landscape were against them. All Europe followed suit. In France, Marie Antoinette escaped from the gardens at Versailles, building herself the hamlet in the gardens of the Petit Trianon. In England Pope poured ridicule on both the grandeur that classicism had reached and the conceits to which it had fallen. Of Blenheim he wrote: " 'Tis very fine, but where d'ye sleep and where d'ye dine ?" and at an imaginary sale of clipped evergreens, " . . . a quickset hog, shot up into a porcupine, by its being forgot a week in rainy weather." The cry was for the return to the Gothic age, the true tradition of England; and the loudest answer came from Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill. Everywhere romance coloured the arts. At first it was declared that garden architecture as such must cease to exist. Walpole, speaking of William Kent, the first landscape architect, says: " Kent leapt the fence and saw that all nature was a garden." The hard lines of architecture were to be removed as much as possible, and nature brought to the threshold of the house. Paths were made to curl and curve, for nature has no straight line. At that date England set the fashion for the world, and the wholesale destruction of older gardens that took place extended as far as Italy. For a time the sense of association held the field without a rival. Quaint things associated with nature or mediævalism were introduced for their own sake. Because ruins had about them the glamour of romance, imitation ruins of Gothic buildings or Grecian temples were scattered about the grounds. Capability Brown probably marks the climax of romanticism, erecting church steeples to enhance the interest of a view. Under his direction vast areas of countryside were altered and " improved." At Blenheim he constructed the artificial lake, the sight of which, when completed, caused him to cry: " 'Thames, Thames, wilt thou ever forgive me ?" Underlying Brown's work, however,



(National Gallery

Malvern Hall. (By Constable.)

ENGLISH SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE GARDENING

there is a keen sense of design, and among his many followers there is one, Humphrey Repton, who did not hesitate to condemn faults of his predecessors. Though this period never produced a single really great man to bring landscape design to its ultimate stage, yet Repton was an artist with the ability to consider the whole of his subject in an unbiased way. He saw that nature was a garden of itself alone, that it cannot be copied, and that the principles of landscape design are the same as those of any design. In reality, landscape gardens are possibly more artificial than the older gardens that precede them. The former in principle absorb the country, while the latter are absorbed by it.

The lasting monument of the English Landscape School is the park. The period found the aristocracy prouder and wealthier than ever, and a stately home was as much a hallmark of dignity as a line of ancestors. Everything that suggested work in any form was kept out of sight; round the house was gathered all that was noblest in the countryside.

The park can be conceived as an introduction between the house and a surrounding country in its virgin state, where forests and bald plains contrast, and where there are no hedges nor villages to break up the land into a smaller scale. All art is in a sense illusion; the mind can wander farther than the eye. In a truly English park, where expanse of turf sweeps between groups of trees and over the tops of hills into infinity, greater spaces still are suggested to the imagination. The extent varies to which the mind is thus allowed to wander, but undoubtedly the imagination at this period was fresh from its long confinement under classicism. Formality had been overstressed, and the repose of an avenue where the eye is firmly directed on its course gave way to arrangement that was stimulating rather than restful. For a time the landscape architect followed the landscape painter. Such artists as Claude were studied both for massing of light and shade and the countless little interesting things that go to make a single view. Here the likeness to the sister art ceases. The spectator in a park moves about, and the effect round him is constantly changing. Carefully arranged pictorial compositions from the house or from particular points in the park are not in themselves sufficient to make a design. If the plan is as

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carefully composed as any classic plan, groups of trees, and water, fall naturally into pleasant arrangement from whatever view they are seen.

To the early pioneers of the return to nature, the house proved a stumbling-block. If the house was ignored as an unfortunate necessity for man, there still remained such considerations as the approach. Turf drives proved inadequate, and gravel covered in moss too slippery. The things that civilisation demands may be trivial, but they are essential. Brown admitted a "line of formality" between house and park. It was Repton who first seriously appreciated the incongruity, and began slowly to build house and park together. Oriental influence was now pronounced in England, and the traditional Japanese garden in its relation to house has a bearing on the ideal of the Landscape School. In Japan the garden is a landscape formalised, and the house itself is but a further stage from this. Types of rooms inside are not only expressed in its arrangement, but every room has a similar aspect. This produces a building that to Western minds is quaintly informal and straggly; in reality, house and garden are a perfect blend. In England, though the true spirit of Oriental informality was left behind in Japan, Repton began to break up the great block of the house into shadows and planes, "designing," as he says, "in the Gothic manner." Actually he was feeling his way to the traditional forms that had grown up through the influence of English landscape. There is already in a house of this character an element of nature. Between house and park were one or two terraces, the last with a scarcely visible line between the mown grass of the one and the rough turf of the other. The subtlest introduction lies in the planting of trees, composing in formal groups immediately by the house, and widening outwards in groups of trees and copses that grow less pronouncedly arranged as they recede. Outposts of the house appeared in scattered lodges or summer-houses, spreading abroad its character and materials. Because the scale of a house and park is so great that any open introduction between the two in the way of a garden cannot be intimate, the flower garden was hidden away in a walled enclosure, which itself became an element in the massing of the house.

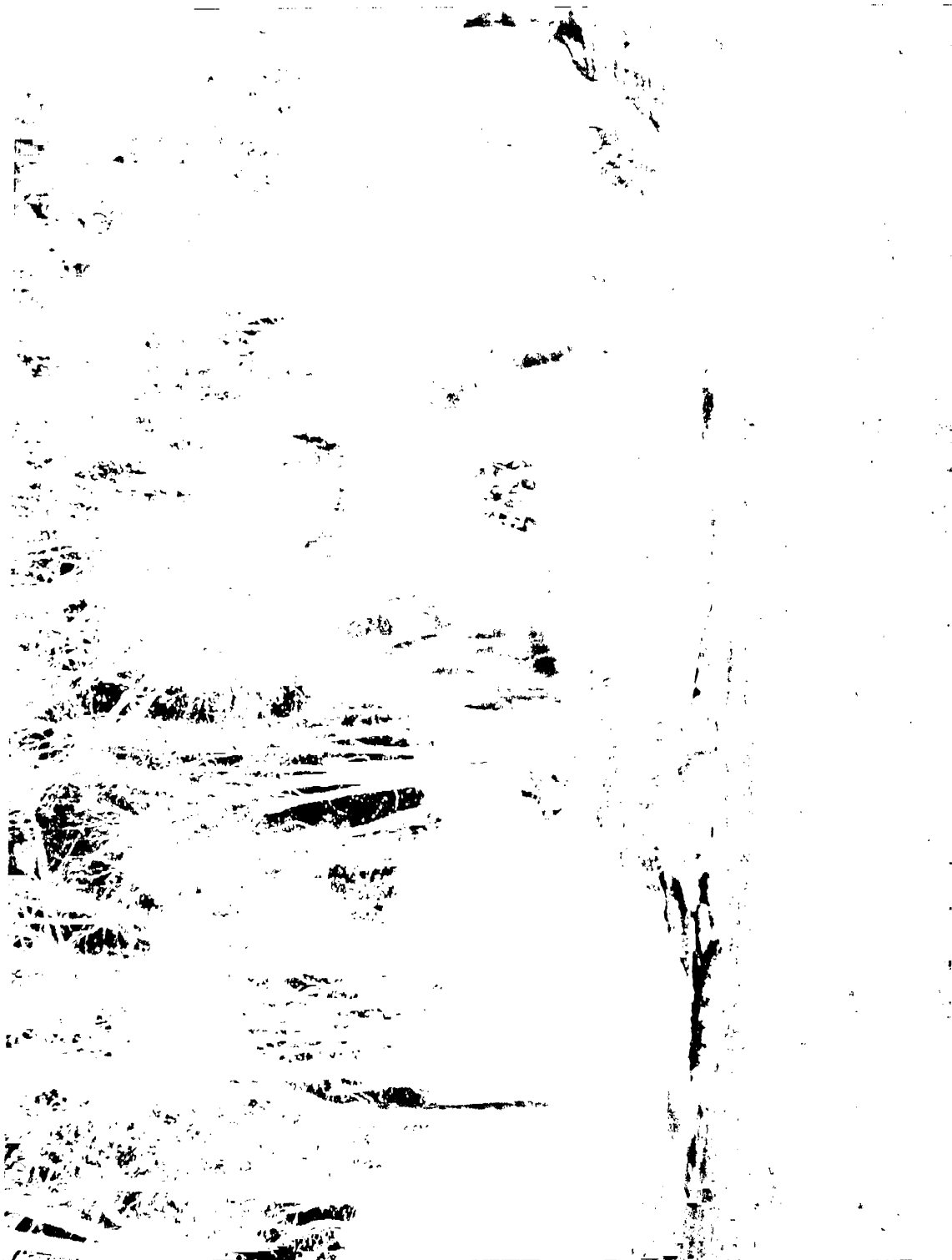
ENGLISH SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE GARDENING



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

The Lake at Blenheim.

Only for a brief period was nature literally brought to the door. Soon the need of an introduction between house and country began once more to be felt, and the park unconsciously answered the need. The relation to the country is illusory, because the surroundings are nearly always imagined. On the one hand no visible boundaries were to enclose the park, whose extent was limitless; on the other, the surrounding country in England is nearly always agricultural and therefore broken up into fields. The traditional countryside had either to be seen from a distance, or so altered in character as to be in harmony with the park. Compare such apparently contrasting types as the gardens of Versailles to Arundel Park, in the immediate relation to their surroundings. Both pass out into humbler surroundings, the one by dominating avenues, the other boldly by suggestion; only when the country is grander is it admitted, Versailles being



Baths of Apollo, Versailles.

ENGLISH SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE GARDENING

open to the Satory Woods across the Swiss Lake, and Arundel to the South Downs. The admission of the planes of a distant view is one of the noblest attributes of the park, for the simple foreground offers no rivalry in interest. The relation of the design to its immediate site is equally integral. More often than not the site extends over hills and valleys, and the curving shapes of rich deciduous trees echo the rolling lines on which they stand.

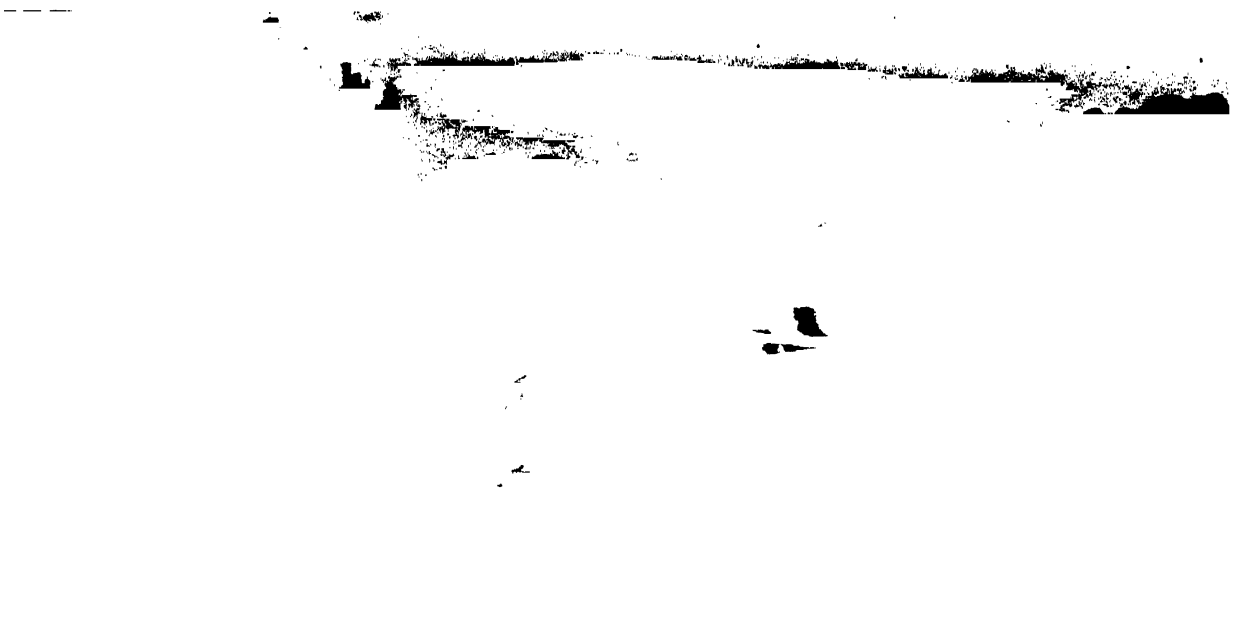
The elimination of most of nature's interests is the first step towards unity as it is to a broad effect. The principal elements in a park, apart from the house or lake, are turf and trees, and the whole scheme might almost be regarded as being modelled in a solid green material. Nature deftly plays her variations afterwards. Trees are marshalled into groups, and the groups are arranged about the ground, balancing each other asymmetrically in size, shape, and position. Deer scattered here and there not only carry on an association of ideas, but give to trees what is called a "browsing line." Every tree is brought into uniformity with its neighbours by this base line, where foliage ceases six feet from the ground.

The art of perspective was developed under the influence of painting, and was at times carried to extremes. The art lies in deceiving the eye to a certain extent, and no more; beyond this the sensibility revolts. A broad river is certainly finer in a park than a narrow lake, but when the two ends of the river are seen to be dummies, a favourite device, the illusion once broken cannot be mended. On the other hand, if a view is increased in distance by the closing in of receding groups of trees, the subtlety never obtrudes. The appreciation of size in the distance is difficult without any work of man, from architectural features to ploughed fields, to give scale, and often relies upon the deer, whose size is known and constant. The eye is as easily misled by suggestion. A house that stands low in a valley acquires both a sense of dryness and dignity if there is a lake even only a few feet below it. The eye leaps to the lightest point in the view, the surface of water, and from that level judges the relative height of things around. The initial problem of the approach is solved by perspective: a direct one over undulating ground both conforms to the general roundness of

GARDENS AND DESIGN

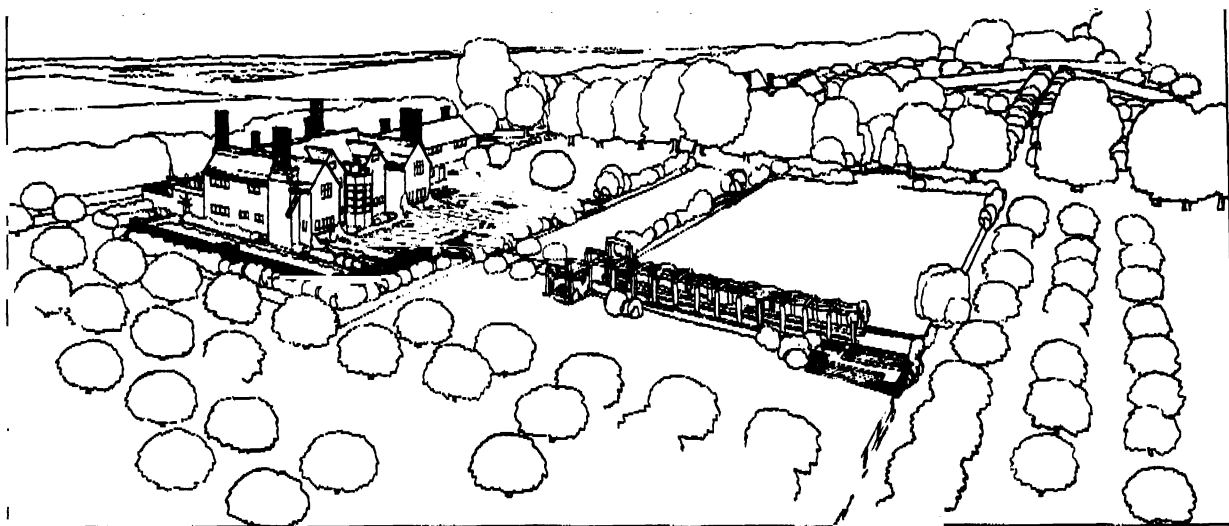
things and heralds the house across the park. When water is introduced into the picture its brightness instantly attracts the eye, and can alter the character of a view. At Lathom, the character of a framed view of a grove of oaks was given by a formal pool across which it was seen as a secondary interest. To make the interest return to the distance, the pool was removed.

The English Landscape School was associated with a host of trouble that did not cease when ruins lost their fashion. People who misunderstood the principles brought down upon it by their work a discredit it did not deserve. Without the sense of design that underlies the composition of rocks at Versailles such ideas of nature come to grief. Contemporary architecture was deplorable, and the house was seldom worthy of the park in which it was set. The park itself carries with it a sense of fresh clean air and glorious spaces, worthy of the country.



Prior Park, Bath.

Photo, F. R. Yeshury.



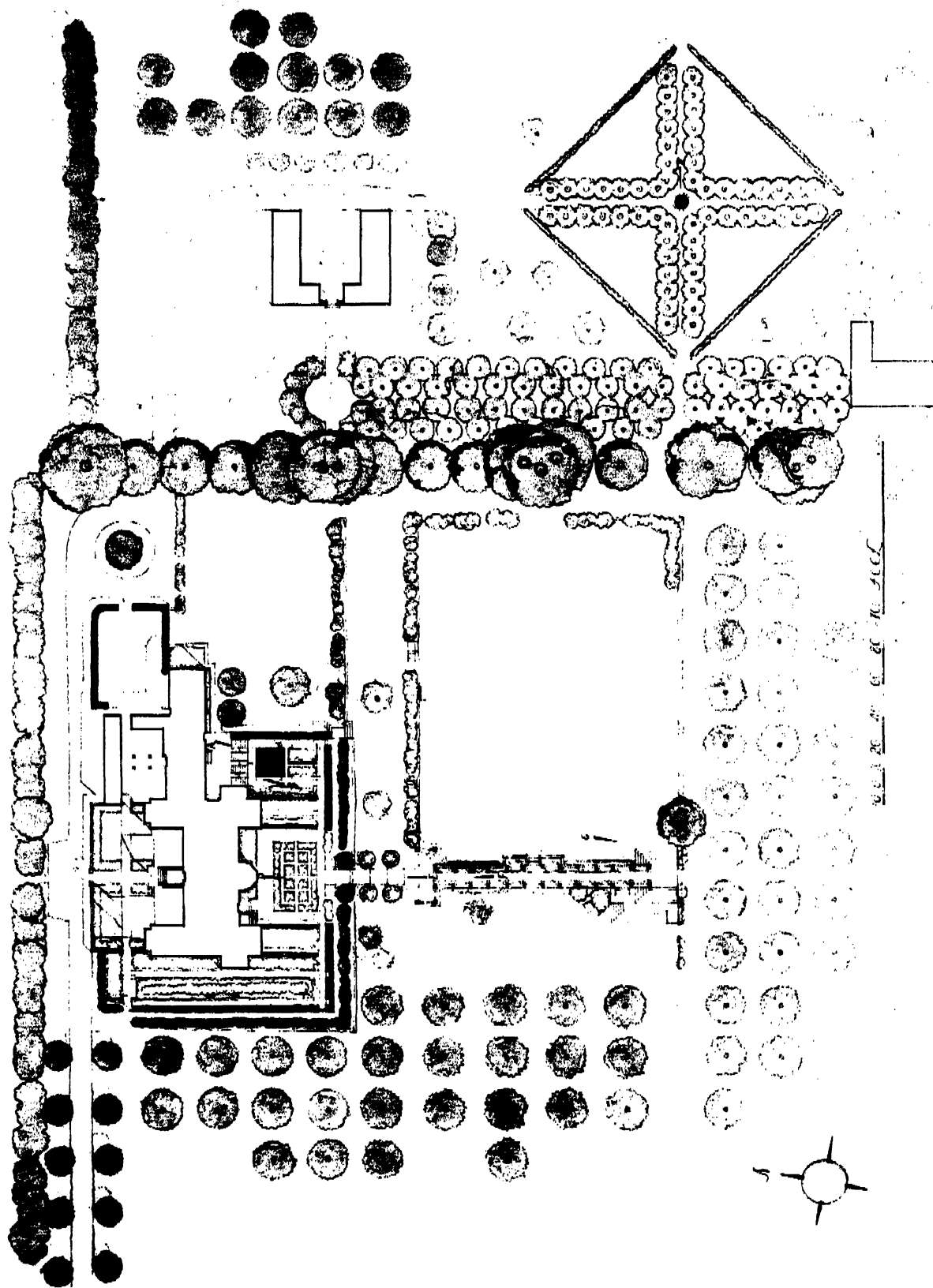
Little Thakeham, Sussex.

II

LITTLE THAKEHAM, SUSSEX

THE weald of Sussex, protected on the north and south by downs, is like a chessboard, every field coloured by its own cultivation. Across this the roads from London to the south coast towns thread their way, linking together the towns and villages they pass. The downs come prominently into view on the south side of Horsham, and then it is their presence is perpetually felt. Myths and legends crowd round them as thick as the clouds that blow in from the sea: of how a young king of Sussex kept vigil up in Chanctonbury Ring, immersing his head at midnight in the dewpond; or of how Proud Rosalind lived at Amberley Castle.* All day long when the sun is shining they cast shadows upon the busy workaday country that runs up to their base. Little Thakeham stands a long way back from the shadows, and from thereabouts the great rolling spurs can be seen following one another into the distance east and west. The house faces south, and is placed on a small ridge that slopes away gently in front, but drops abruptly to the north to give a view back across the weald. The first impression is one of gables and chimneys rising from surrounding orchards. In the summer the sun warms the tiled roofs and stone walls, but the small

* Eleanor Farjeon, "Martin Pippin in the Apple Orchard."



Photo, F. R. Yebury.

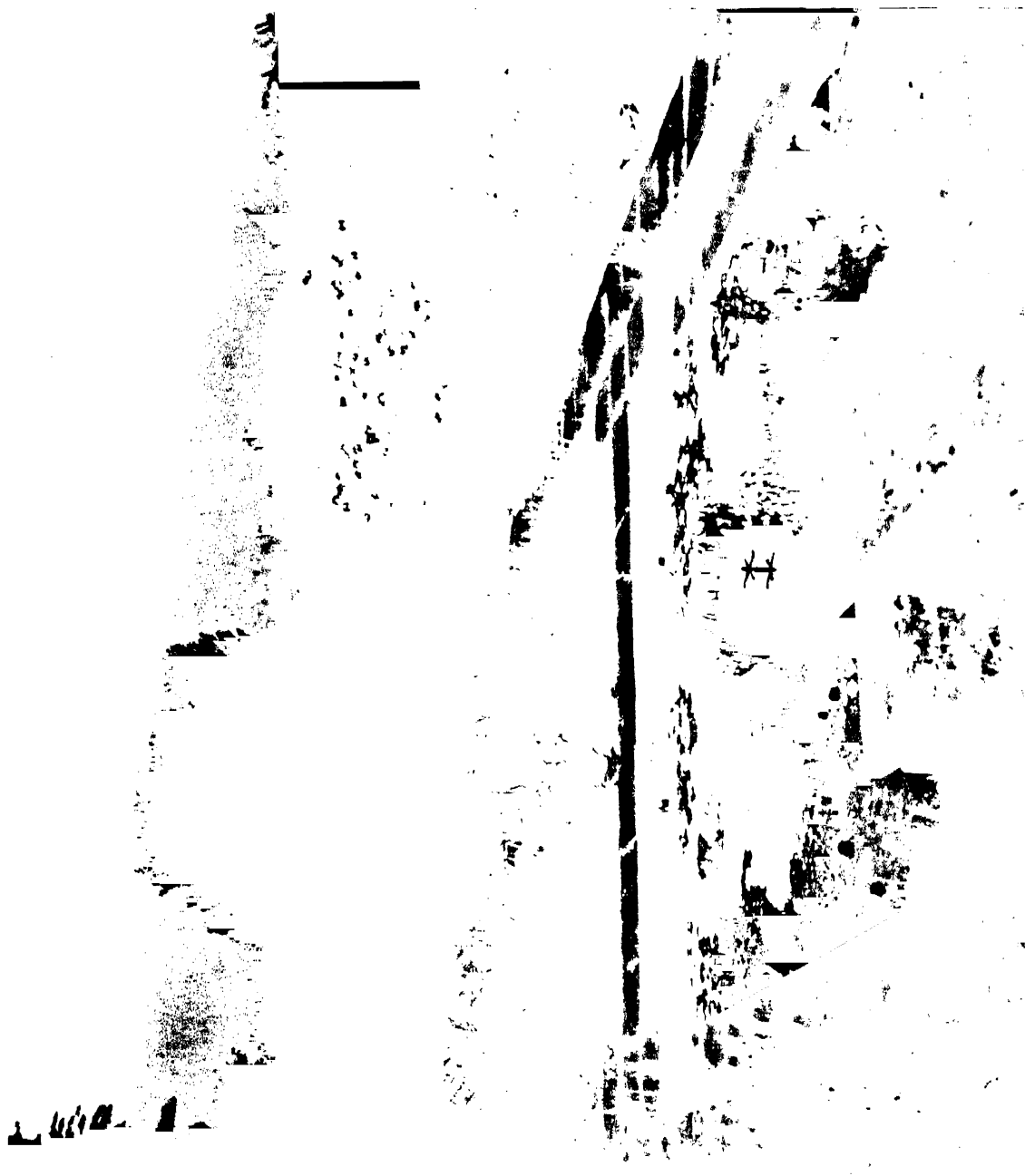
Little Thakeham

LITTLE THAKEHAM, SUSSEX

windows and massive chimneys tell of its exposed situation, and of the comfort that lies within during a bleak English winter.

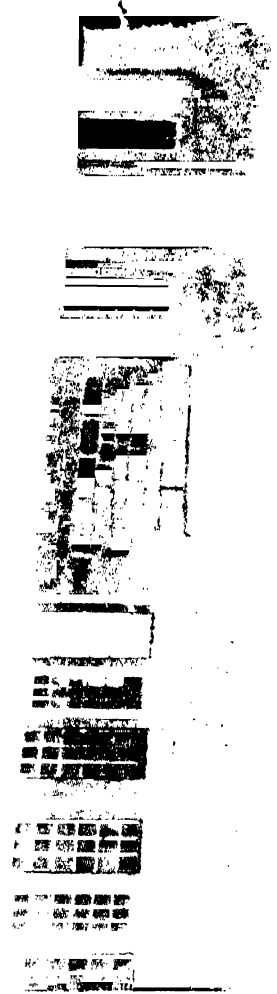
Apart from the contours, the main natural features round which the garden was worked were a row of elms that run north and south, a simple belt of trees where the ground begins to rise again to the south, and a break to the south-west in this middle distance, that reveals a spur of down dark against the sky. The approach drive from the west leads on past the house to a turning space that is out of sight, and on through the elms to the stables, which with the kitchen garden are thus carefully screened. The house is more or less symmetrical, except for the wing that extends on the east side, and the centre on the garden façade is marked by a great oriel. From this the central axis is carried south between hedges, down a short stepped ramp, on through a pergola built up high above the surrounding land, and so over the intervening orchard to the belt of trees beyond. Otherwise the parts round the house are secluded and made intimate by a formal hedge. Each bay of the house finds its echo on the ground before it. There is the lily pond with its intricacies of rills and steps, from the top of which on most days the down can be seen rolling above the excitement that lies at one's feet. Beside this is a garden of climbing roses; centrally is a stone-paved patterned flower garden; then another like the one before; and finally a garden of peonies and anachars extending down the side of the house, that was intended to have been finished on a loggia by the entrance. Cut out of the surrounding hedges are alcoves with more seats.

The principal way out of this chaos of flowers and formal architecture, the central walk, leads across a short terrace to the entrance to the pergola. To the left of this a device of steps leads down to the lawn. The east side of the pergola facing the lawn is closed down except for the three central bays, but the whole of the opposite side is open across orchards to that distant glimpse of down, and as if to emphasize the view still more, a monumental flight of steps turns the interest at the end of the walk in that direction. It is delightful to walk down this pergola, so much above the surrounding level and yet with so much sense of protection, roses clambering over the massive cross-pieces, sea pinks lining the



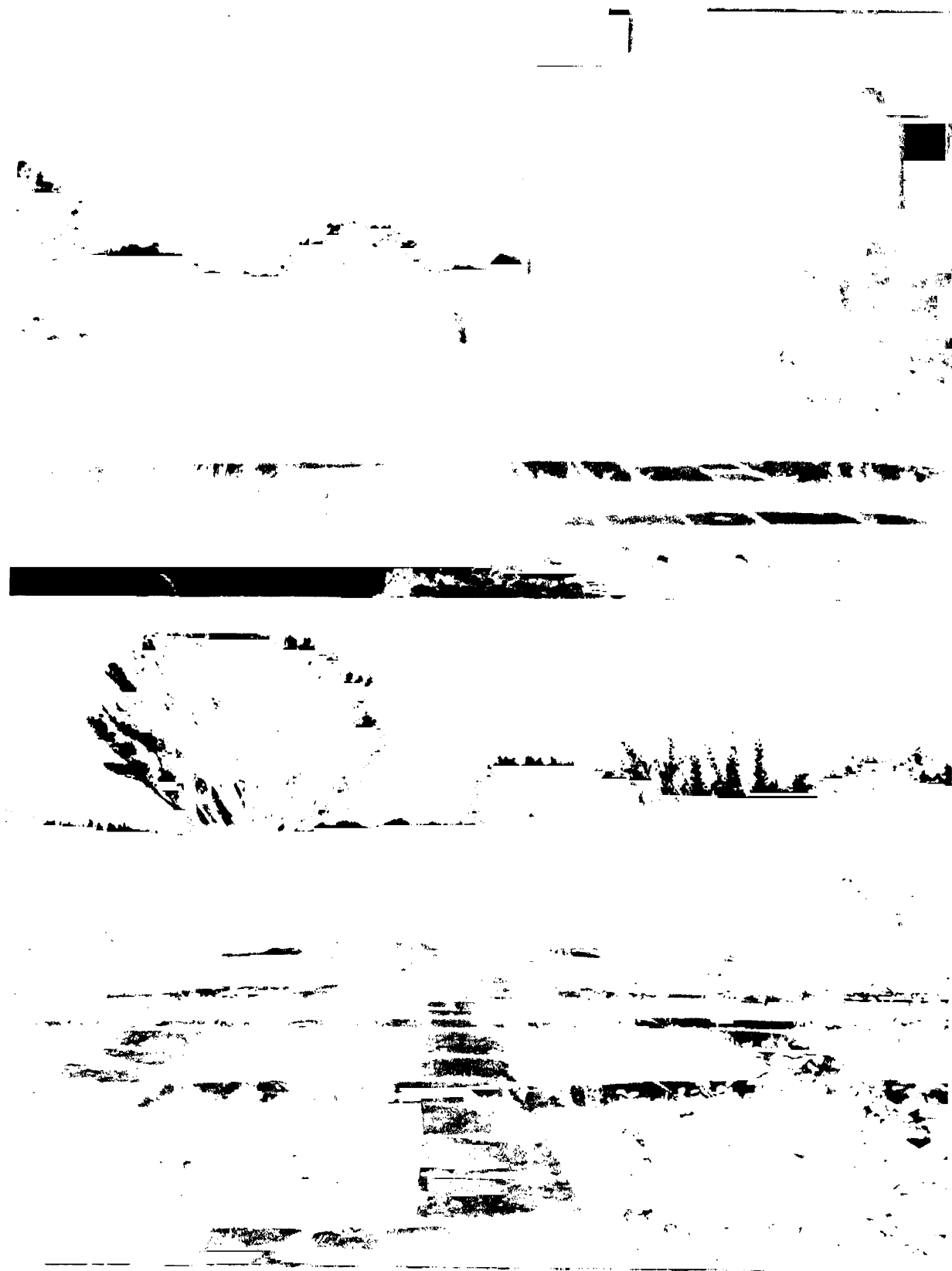
Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Little Thakeham.
(Viewpoint A on plan.)



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Little Thakeham.
(Viewpoint B on plan.)



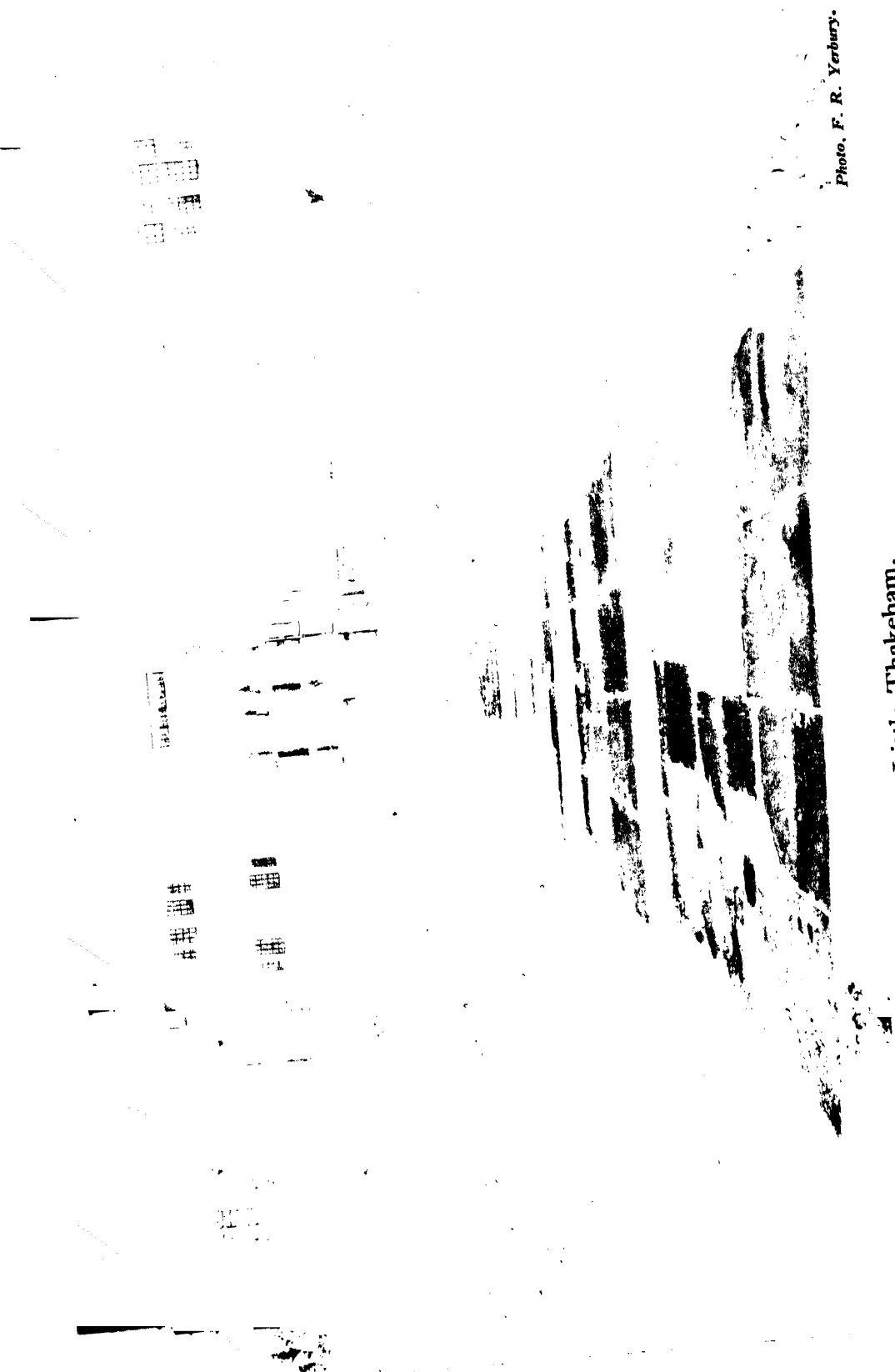
Little Thakeham.

Above : Viewpoint C on plan. Below : Viewpoint D on plan. Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

LITTLE THAKEHAM, SUSSEX

path and nestling at the foot of piers. Here the south-west wind blows briskly from the sea. Below, the orchards with their standard planting disappear away on all sides. The great lawn that stretches east of the pergola is a foil to the excitement everywhere else, and from here can be seen how the long line of pergola carries across the firmness of the house into the skyline. Sometimes the sea mists come riding over the downs, blotting out everything on their way, and settling in a damp dew. These are the days when elms and house and pergola stand out in silhouette. On the further side of the row of elms is a quite secluded nut walk that leads down to a barn, and on beyond is the fruit garden, diamond-shaped and enclosed with espaliers. In the centre is a dipping well, designed with as much care and precision as any part of the house. This little pool with the steps leading into the water is a charming retreat, for the apple trees gather round and recall the symbols and associations of the East, where the fruit trees were ceremoniously married to the well and life given to the garden.

These further parts of the garden seem to disappear imperceptibly away into orchards and trees, gradually escaping from the lines of the plan. The plan considered as pattern is curious. Though the house is symmetrical with a strong central axis extending before it, the garden lies almost entirely to the south-east. There is an apparent want of balance about an axis that strongly calls for balance. In reality the orchards make up the balance and form a wide space introducing the view, which is thus drawn in as an integral part of the scheme. The excitements running round the house are held together by slender paths, and the whole area, including the house, is brought into relation with the bold simple terraces by the double hedge line that encloses them. Another small square garden, according to early plans, was intended to adjoin the lily pond, and this would have emphasized the unity of the group with the house. This medley is one part, the terrace is a second, and the lawn a third part of the main scheme that is to a certain extent linked together by the central walk. The weakest part of the scheme as it stands to-day is the stepped path that leads across the second terrace to the entrance to the pergola. Originally a more



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Little Thakeham.
(Viewpoint E on plan.)

LITTLE THAKEHAM, SUSSEX

formal and interesting design was intended, but never carried out, to connect the lower to the upper garden. The elms are a perpetual foil to the long lines of the garden, and because the finest group is on the axis of the main lawn, and two more frame the way to the stables, they are as much a part of the scheme as the pergola itself.

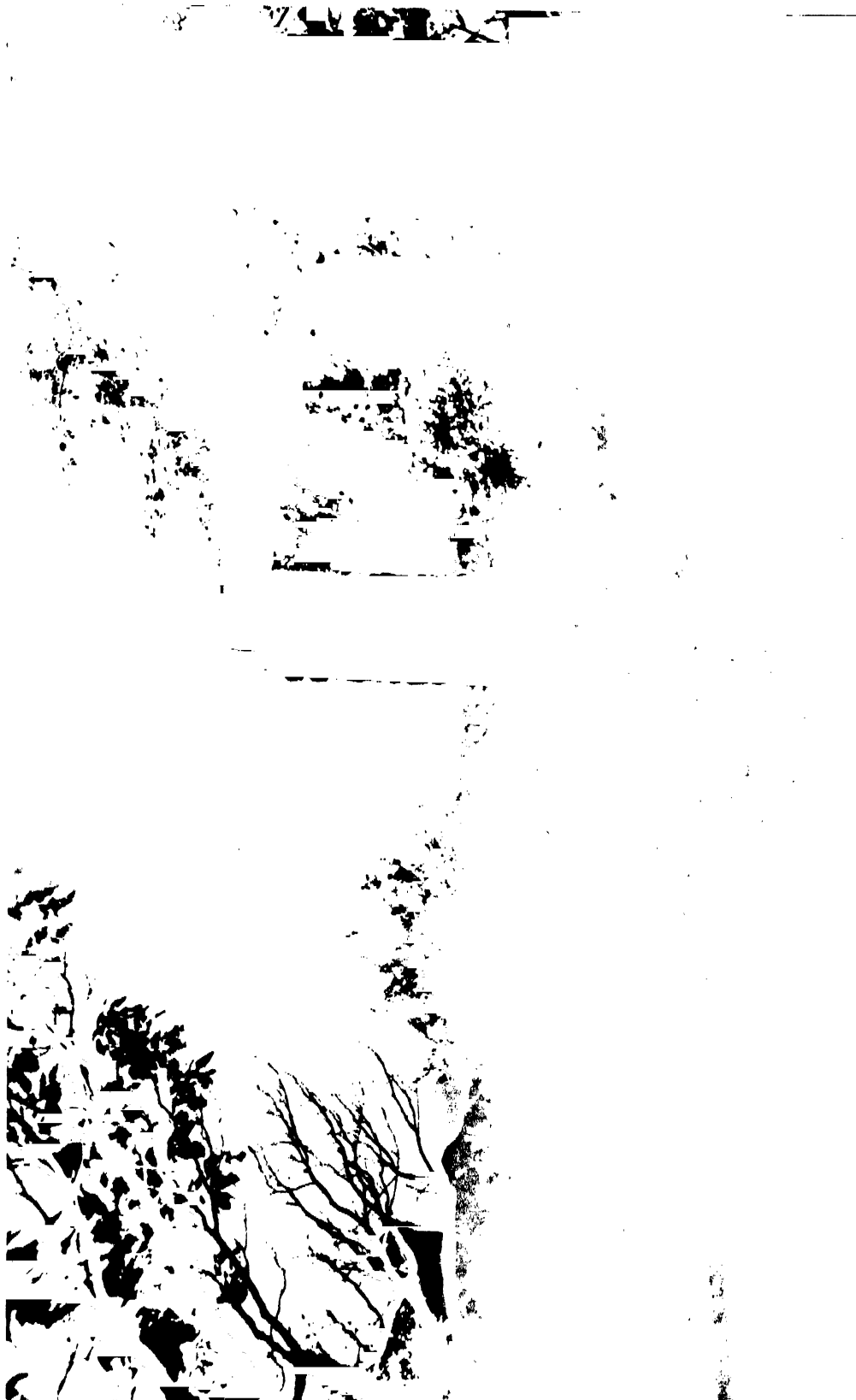
Little Thakeham is one of the houses that followed the uncertain footsteps of Philip Webb or Norman Shaw. While those architects were heralding the return to the English tradition of Tudor or Elizabethan times, it was Sir Edwin Lutyens who first proceeded not merely to interpret the spirit of those times, but to carry on at the point where tradition was swamped by foreign influence. Probably the house might be criticised as being too traditional in form to be rational architecture of the day. The little devices that everywhere abound to hasten on surface effects usually given by time have become after twenty-five years of weathering rather superfluous. The design of the garden seems very much in advance of the house; it would be interesting to know how far Francis Bacon would have approved of these free ideas. Here is a technique in planning that is adjustable to every circumstance and situation, and the versatility that gives so much separate interest to a Lutyens garden. Little Thakeham is one of the least dramatic and its originality is not prominent. It settles into its surroundings as though it had been there always. Mundane fields and hedges were not a part of the English Landscape School, but circumstances now began to intermingle people again with the life that went on immediately around them. The lines of the garden at Little Thakeham were largely dictated by the very hedges that a few generations before were despised.

The climate in England is to-day presumably the same as it has ever been, but its influence on the immediate relation of house and garden varies considerably. In this house the interior is almost entirely cut off from the outside by the smallness of the windows. The treatment of the main hall, however, has an external quality, recalling the stonework immediately round the house. With changing circumstances of life, including modern heating, and communications that make the country accessible, the summer begins to be more important than



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Little Thakeham.
(Viewpoint F on plan.)

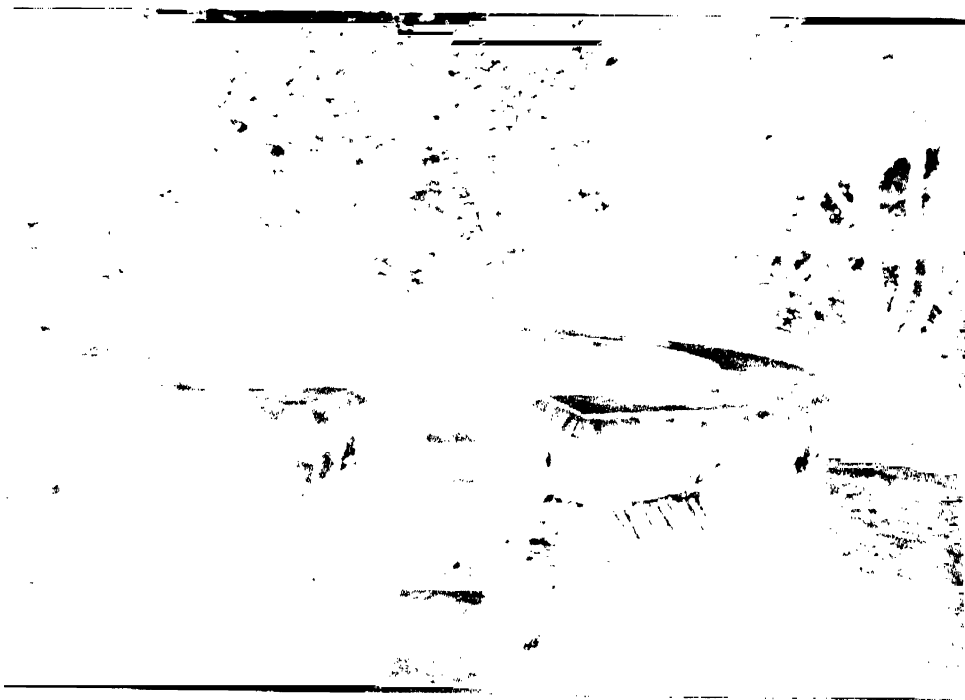


Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Little Thakeham.
(Viewpoint G on plan.)

GARDENS AND DESIGN

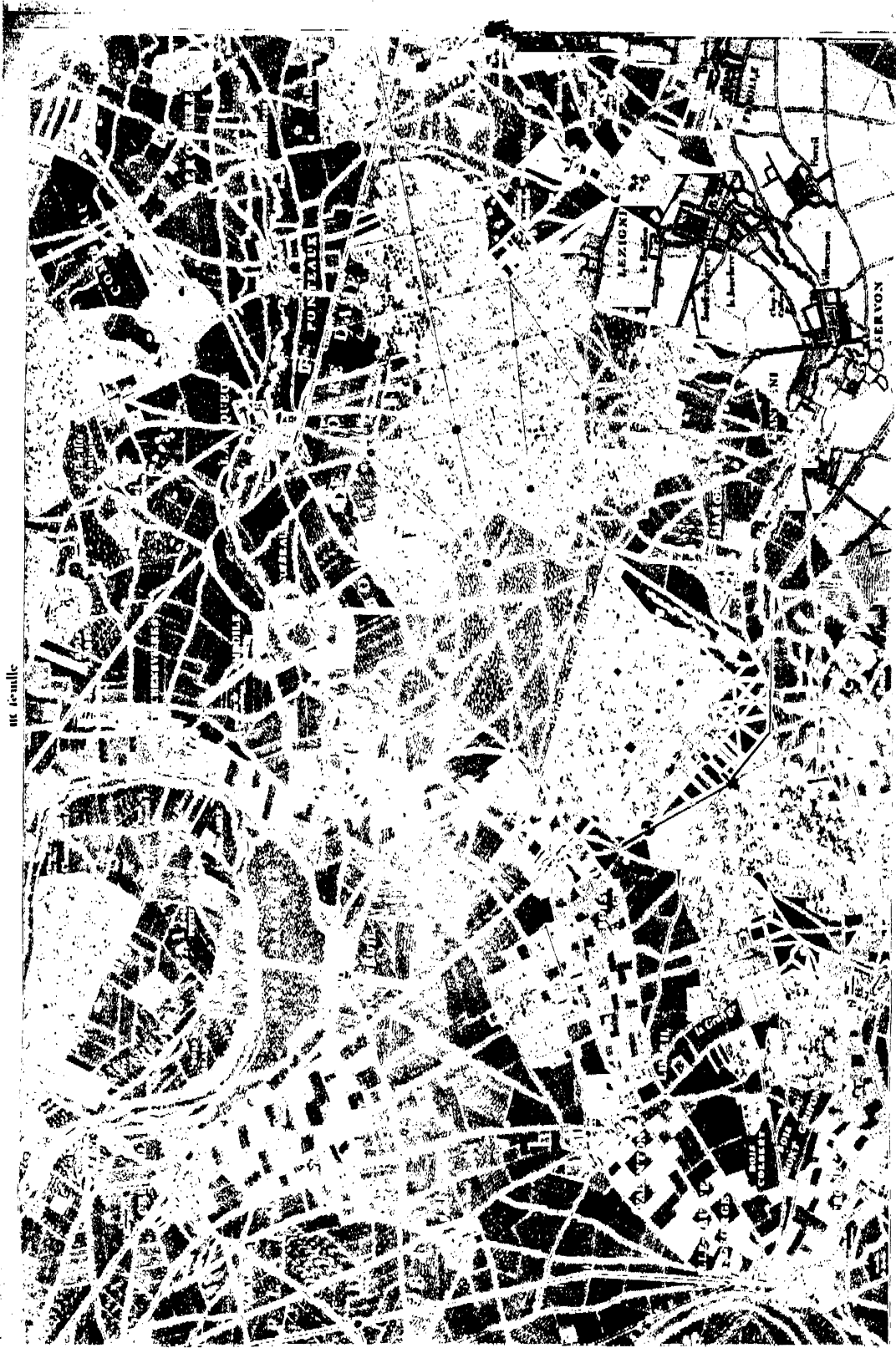
the winter. In America, where the climate is certainly more inviting, the loose and open planning of airy spaces has the effect of almost drawing the garden through the house (page 89). The distribution of wealth is steadily making for the development of the smaller house, where requirements take precedence over studied effect, and so by the asymmetrical grouping that is always the logical expression of requirements, continues the work of drawing together house and nature. Against this is the gradual alteration of the whole countryside by the very quantity of these houses, only a few of which have any genuine consideration for their surroundings. Materials often can be brought more cheaply from longer distances than it is possible to acquire locally, and this means a standardisation that ignores the ground on which they rest. The speeding up of modern life, and a consequent decline in thought that is the natural outcome of hurry, tend towards buildings of a temporary rather than permanent character. Even now it is rare to see a garden planted for ten or twenty years hence, when it would not have been unusual in the past to plant only for posterity. Interest in our own garden lies in the immediate future, and soon there may be nothing of our own that will be worth passing on.



III

THE NATIONAL GARDEN

THOUGH the great individual garden is passing, there rises the vaster problem of what may be called the national garden. In the country there are roads and village greens, views and spaces, and in a wider sense the care of the country itself. In cities there are parks, squares, boulevards, anywhere nature has been admitted purely for pleasure and refreshment. Such places in towns are not only for health; they are the sympathetic touch so vital to a community. To those especially who are unable often to reach the country, the crudest park or garden becomes beautiful by contrast, and the constant presence of beauty cannot fail to be ennobling. History shows how many towns have so benefited by being a part of the lay-out round an estate. The whole city of Karlsruhe in Germany emanates from the palace and its gardens; Richelieu, a town in France entirely built by the great statesman of Louis XIII., was itself dependent in design upon the garden of the château; the up-to-date suburban town of Versailles still contains the spirit of the Grand Monarch and his park. In the life of these places nature is only a dim, powerful background; the effect is more real if it has been brought into the streets themselves. Because a town is the very heart of civilisation, nature is even more ordered than in a garden. The French have appreciated this, and with their grasp of ideas on a huge scale began a tradition under the monarchy that is being carried on to-day more grandly than in any country in Europe. The Boulevards and Champs Elysées carry into the heart of Paris the freshness of the country. The town of Nancy boasts one of the most charming municipal centres in the world, the whole character given to a rich architecture by a centre way of firmly clipped trees, under which pedestrians may walk or rest. At Nîmes, in the south of France, there are public gardens laid out on the ancient Roman baths, that must be among the most sumptuous and pleasant of any existing. Sometimes a city rampart has been altered from a place of war to one of peace. At Lucca, in Italy, the encircling walls are as grim and unyielding as ever; but the soldiers who manned the walls have been replaced by rows of trees that stand out stark against the evening sky. In a smaller way the public fountains in a city cheer



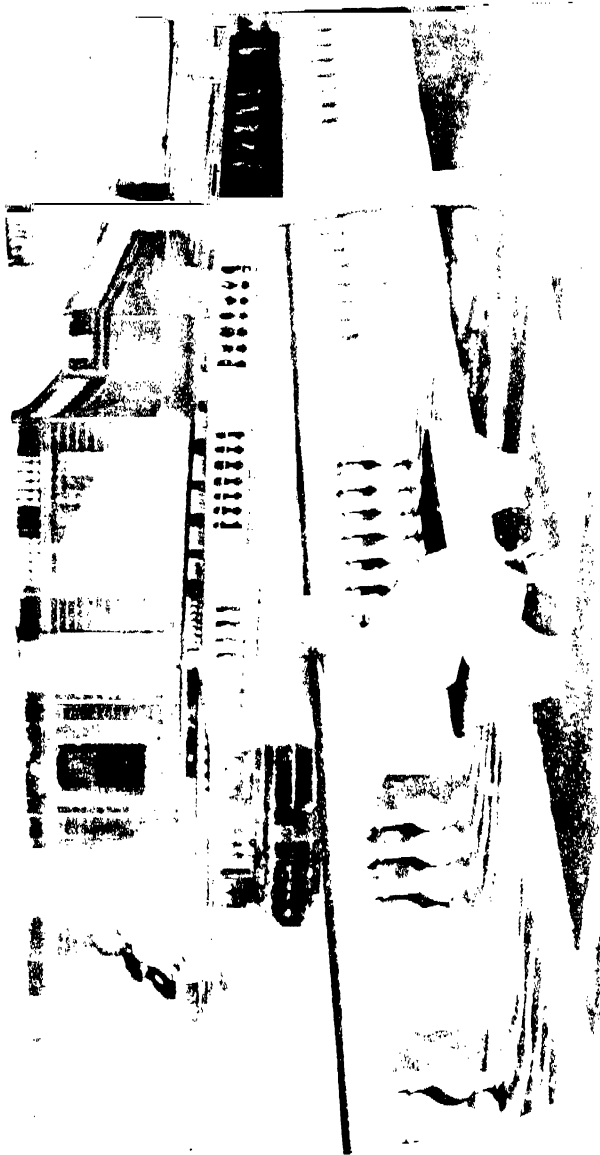
Artificiality of Country round Paris.

From a survey by Delagrè, 1740.

THE NATIONAL GARDEN

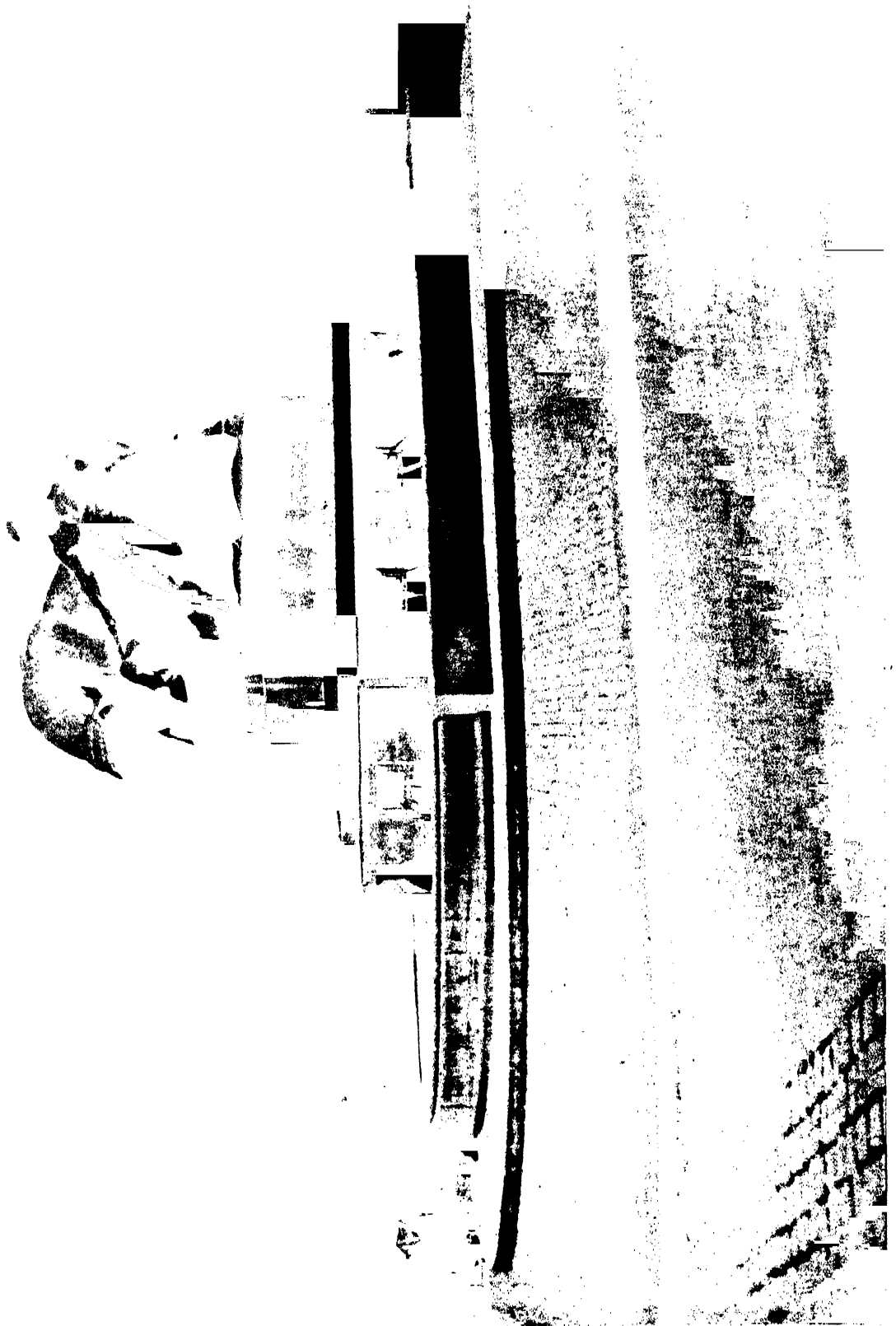
by the sparkle and utter abandon of water. Rome in the seventeenth century is supposed to have had some hundreds of public fountains, fed by water brought at vast expense across the Campagna from the neighbouring hills. London has few of these integral delights, but it has the squares; as a part of the daily life they must be preserved for ever, for people need them as surely as they need the churches.

It is almost safe to say that no civic work of any magnitude can be undertaken without some immediate sacrifice on the part of the community concerned. There must be some noble instigation behind the enterprise, and that this is possible even in this materialistic world is told in the story that lies behind the gigantic lay-out of Chicago. In England the garden city movement is in each case the undertaking of a few individuals, but in reality it is the conception of a community where everyone has an equal share in the life around. At Hampstead Garden Suburb the spacious municipal centre between the two churches is reflected in those communal gardens that welcome every passer-by. Of her parks London is justly proud, and it is delightful to escape into them from eternal building. But they are not an integral part of London, not mixed up inextricably with the life as they try to be in Paris, bringing nature to the feet of the passer-by; rather the passer-by toils off to see the piece of nature so artfully trapped in his midst. However refreshing they may be, there is rarely anything great in these parks that would inspire as well as refresh the man in the street, and raise him unknown to himself from otherwise somewhat sordid surroundings. An exception is Kensington Gardens, for the trees and spaces are in stately unity with the outside world, as though the streets have shed the necessities of their existence, and existed only for the pleasure. How can the humblest remain unaffected when these tall, silent works of nature line his way? Similarly flowers can be intimately seen in the enclosed flower garden by the palace, where elsewhere their sweetness is lost in open beds whose chief merit is their lavishness and superb horticulture. Squares are different in character, and among the plane trees of Bedford Square and Gray's Inn, where the firm background of buildings is ever present, the charm lies in the pattern of slender forms and



Photo, F. R. Yerbury.

Public Gardens at Nîmes



Public Fountain at Zurich, Switzerland.

Kensington Gardens, London.

THE NATIONAL GARDEN

colour. It is one of the ironies of modern civilisation in England that these places, and similar places in the parks themselves, are hemmed in by railings. Iron railings are not necessarily ugly, but their very existence is against the suggestion of freedom. It is perhaps in the northern countries of Europe, particularly in Sweden, that the realisation of beautiful things in the everyday life of the people is most coming about, and it is true that the average standard of living is equivalently higher. Stockholm is called the Venice of the north, and the town hall is the symbol of a national effort where many artists have worked, either in or on the building itself, or for the superb little public garden (page 82) that stretches along the water front. In Central Europe, Zurich, the commercial capital of Switzerland, has developed an interest in public works that is almost as remarkable. While nature is being introduced into the towns, there is the meeting between town and country, and in a broader way the same problem arises as between house and country. 'There is the front to a seaside town. The sea sweeps from horizon to horizon, and in sympathy the front stretches more or less unbroken; gardens and flowers in such a position are not only lost, they are irritating. At Littlehampton, in Sussex, the houses have been set back a hundred yards or so, and the space in between was once an almost unbroken expanse of turf, echoing the sea beyond. Inland, towns are gradually eating up the countryside, sending out great feelers along the main roads, emanating not from the spirit that conceived a civic centre, but from that of commercialism. The old approach to Brighton, laid out by the Prince Regent, is one of the few in England worthy of the name. In the country itself, the villages are expanding indefinitely. In the Middle Ages they were the outcome of requirements; they grew up haphazardly, but the significance of the church led to its being the centre round which clustered the houses, making a natural composition. The materials from which they were built were acquired locally, and the effect to-day, after time has matured them, is that such places in their irregularity do indeed grow out of the country. When civic law began to take precedence over that of the church, the centre of interest moved to the actual life of the village, roads, markets, and above all the municipal centre. This meant the full significance

Gray's Inn, London.



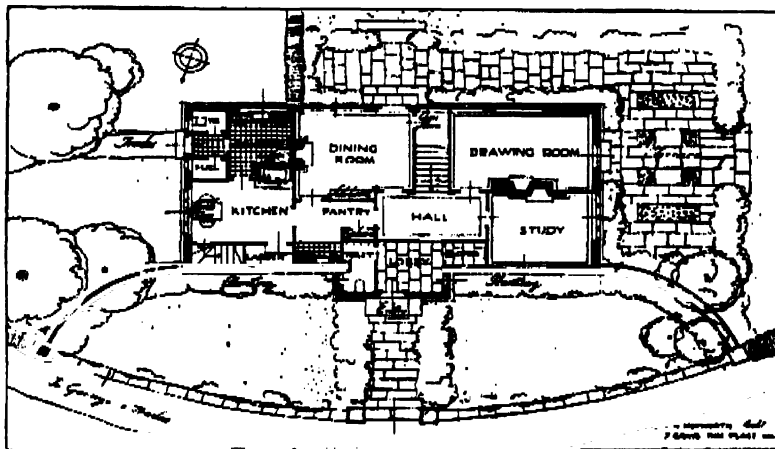
Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb.

GARDENS AND DESIGN

of the Renaissance, the dignity of man asserting itself. From that moment the suppression of country has continued unmistakably throughout the centuries. This is not a sign of deterioration, for the finest works of man are in advance of the average state of nature—it is only at times that nature rises to that sublime perfection men cannot hope to attain. A certain artificiality was sometimes lent to the whole countryside by roads, the importance of which in the Renaissance was perhaps even greater than now.* 'The country round Paris is partially beautiful and partially dull, and it may have been this that led the French monarchy and nobility to connect their seats with great avenues that stretch across the countryside, changing its whole aspect. 'To-day it is necessary in a far greater degree to co-ordinate vast areas, and though it is inevitable that the whole character of the countryside will soon be altered, it should be so altered to welcome rather than repel the stranger. There is real need for a combined effort, not to attempt to preserve the country as it is now, but to preserve the spirit of it in the form it is likely to take: skyline, groups of trees, water; hedges, fields, spaces that are waiting to be filled; moors and downs over which it is unreasonable to extend; colour; and above all a web of roads picking the logical way to their destinations. 'The great arterial roads with their attendant petrol stations, garages, and perpetual roar, give a basis of artificiality more dominant than at any previous period. These are the keynotes, and the subdivisions follow: roads spreading and linking together villages, and a countryside of scattered houses dependent on the roads and through these again on the countryside. In time roads may lose their significance, for science is a factor in modern life, a necessity that breaks down long accustomed barriers. It frees the world from the millstones to which it is used, and for a moment man stands amazed, lost in consternation. But tradition clings, and the complex persons who people God's earth remain the same; these things are not easily standardised.

* "A network of roads, like veins, was strung over the land, interlacing, branching, dwindling to nothing . . . all the blood of the land flowed through these veins. The bumpy roads, gaping with dusty cracks in the sun, heavy with mud in the rain, were the moving life of the land, its breath and pulse." (From a description of Germany in the Renaissance in *Jew Süss*, by Lion Feuchtwanger.)

THE NATIONAL GARDEN



House in Devonshire. (By P. D. Hepworth, F.R.I.B.A.)

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